

*The*

**LAST** *of the*  
**MOHICANS**

**James F. Cooper**




**CARLIN  
and  
CHRIST**











Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2018







# The Last of the Mohicans

BY  
JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

ADAPTED BY

HENRY I. CHRIST

*Head of  
English Department*

ANDREW JACKSON  
HIGH SCHOOL  
NEW YORK CITY

JEROME CARLIN

*Head of English Department*

FORT HAMILTON  
HIGH SCHOOL  
NEW YORK CITY

GLOBE BOOK COMPANY, NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

Copyright, 1947,  
by  
Globe Book Company, Inc.  
*All rights reserved*

Illustrations by  
*Thomas Fraumeni*  
Frontispiece  
*Courtesy of United Artists*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## PREFACE

Most adult readers recall with nostalgic warmth certain rare experiences of youth. Among the thrills that can never be quite duplicated are the first meeting with Tom Sawyer, the first trip aboard the *Hispaniola* with Long John Silver, and above all the first acquaintance with Hawkeye—pathfinder, deerslayer, and deadly marksman with “Killdeer.” There is no greater excitement in fiction than the skirmishes in *The Pathfinder* or the pursuits in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Most adults remember shivers of delightful horror when Indian war whoops filled the air, and only the courage of a few men warded off disaster.

Cooper should be for all young people the master storyteller of the days when America was young, and the frontier was just beyond the next county. He should recapture for every generation the breathless interest that enthralled readers of his own day. Yet there is much evidence that modern young readers are drawing further and further away from him. It is the rare schoolboy or girl nowadays who tolerates the inevitable descriptions, even for the sake of the vivid narrative. Modern young people, accustomed to a faster tempo, too often drop Cooper after a desultory attempt at reading him. His opening chapters, providing background information of subsidiary interest, do not gain him new readers.



Potential converts to the Leatherstocking Tales are repelled by Cooper's leisurely descriptive passages that lovingly recreate the landscape he admired. They are annoyed at his Nineteenth Century style with its overloaded sentences, long words, and occasional repetitiousness. They fail to see the point of Hawkeye's lapses from high-flown literary English into strange dialect. They wonder at his strange locutions: *females* and *gentle ones* for the more forthright *girls*. In short, they concur in some of Mark Twain's famous criticisms of Cooper. They pass him by and choose a writer more "suitable."

But what are they missing? In few writers of any period can they find passages as exciting as the massacre at Fort William Henry, the rescue of Duncan and his party from the vengeful Hurons, the death of "the last of the Mohicans." They would search long to find a scene as heavily charged with suspense as the Huron camp, with Uncas bound, awaiting judgment. Few detective stories contain as grueling a man hunt as the Mohicans' trailing of Magua. All the ingredients are here: suspense, headlong action, clear-cut characterization, interesting setting, and hairbreadth escapes. Yet what percentage of our students can boast of having read Cooper? Five percent?

The present volume admittedly hopes to make Cooper addicts of our young people. Without distorting the narrative it presents all the important incidents by eliminating elaboration, circumlocution, and long descriptions. It modernizes the diction to clarify

meaning. It eliminates the maudlin, while retaining scenes of real emotion. It simplifies sentence structure and style. It avoids the complicated Indian nomenclature by designating the enemy as Hurons, rather than the indiscriminate and confusing *Mingo*, *Maqua*, *Iroquois*, or *Huron*. It keeps the best of Cooper, while rejecting those aspects that prove distasteful or bewildering to our modern young readers. It attempts to build vocabulary by retaining more difficult words whose meaning can be derived from the context.

There is opportunity here for character analysis, too, as well as for discussion of the fast-moving plot. Magua is the conventional villain; yet even in the unsympathetic portrait he emerges, despite Cooper's prejudice, with a certain tragic grandeur. His villainy is not, like Iago's, without motivation and reason. And even though a member of the hated Hurons, whom Cooper stereotypes, Magua enlists our understanding, if not our sympathies. Cooper's blanket condemnation of the Hurons is inextricably woven into the fabric of the story; yet Cooper's honesty does give Magua many desirable traits.

Uncas and Magua, Chingachgook and Hawkeye, "Le Renard Subtil" and "La Longue Carabine"—the very names suggest the magic of romantic fiction. They are waiting to lead a new generation of young people along the shores of the Horican into the realm of pure romance. May this book send willing readers along the trail!

H. I. C.

J. C.



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1 . . . . .	1
2 . . . . .	7
3 . . . . .	12
4 . . . . .	26
5 . . . . .	35
6 . . . . .	40
7 . . . . .	55
8 . . . . .	70
9 . . . . .	82
10 . . . . .	88
11 . . . . .	104
12 . . . . .	113
13 . . . . .	125
14 . . . . .	140
15 . . . . .	145
16 . . . . .	156
17 . . . . .	164
18 . . . . .	176
19 . . . . .	187
20 . . . . .	201
21 . . . . .	207
22 . . . . .	213
23 . . . . .	224
24 . . . . .	233
25 . . . . .	239
26 . . . . .	254
Reading Comprehension Questions . . . . .	261





## CHAPTER 1

“Are such painted Indians frequently seen in the woods, Heyward; or is this sight a special entertainment on our behalf?”

“The Indian is a ‘runner’ of the army,” returned Major Duncan Heyward, the officer in charge of the little group. “He has volunteered to guide us to your father’s fort by a little known path sooner than if we followed the slow movements of the troops.”

“I like him not,” said the lady who had spoken, shuddering in terror. “You know him, Duncan, or you would not trust yourself so freely to his keeping?”

“I do know him, Alice, or he would not have my confidence. He is said to have served with our friends the Mohawks, who, as you know, are one of the six allied Indian nations. He was brought among us by some strange accident in which your father was interested, and in which the savage was rigidly dealt with—but I forget the idle tale; it is enough, that he is now our friend.”

“If he has been my father’s enemy, I like him still less!” exclaimed the now really anxious girl. “Will you not speak to him, Major Heyward, that I may hear his tones? Foolish though it may be, you have

## 2 THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

often heard me place my faith in the tones of the human voice!"

"It would be in vain. Though he may understand it, he declares himself ignorant of English. But he stops. The private path by which we are to journey is, doubtless, nearby."

The guess of Major Heyward was true. When they reached the spot where the Indian stood, pointing into the thicket that fringed the military road, a narrow path wide enough for one person at a time became visible.

Here a decision was to be made. The goal of the little party was Fort William Henry. It was there that Colonel Munro, the girls' father, awaited the attack of the French general, Montcalm, and his Indian allies, the Hurons. To reinforce Munro's small garrison, General Webb had that morning sent out a force of British soldiers from Fort Edward. Alice and Cora Munro had planned at first to travel with the reinforcements, but upon the advice of their companion, Major Duncan Heyward, they were now considering a short cut not used by the troops.

"Here, then, lies our way," said the young man, in a low voice. "Show no distrust, or you may invite the danger you appear to dread."

"Cora, what do you think?" asked Alice of her sister who rode by her side. "If we journey with the troops, though we may find their presence annoying, shall we not feel safer?"

“Being little accustomed to the practices of the savages, Alice, you mistake the place of real danger,” said Heyward. “If enemies are in the neighborhood they will surely be found skirting the column of troops where scalps abound the most. The route of the detachment is known, while ours, having been determined within the hour, must still be secret.”

“Should we distrust the man because his manners are not our manners, and because his skin is dark?” coldly asked Cora.

Alice hesitated no longer; but giving her steed a smart cut of the whip, she was the first to dash aside the slight branches of the bushes and to follow the runner along the dark and tangled pathway.

For many minutes the intricacy of the route admitted of no further dialogue. Soon they emerged from the broad border of underbrush which grew along the line of the highway, and entered under the high but dark arches of the forest. Here their progress was less interrupted, and the instant the guide perceived that the two girls could command their steeds, he moved on at a pace which kept the sure-footed animals they rode at a fast yet easy amble.

The youth had turned to speak to the dark-eyed Cora, when the distant sound of horses' hoofs caused him to check his charger. As his companions drew their reins at the same instant, the whole party came to a halt, in order to obtain an explanation of the unlooked-for interruption.



In a few moments a colt was seen gliding, like a fallow-deer, among the straight trunks of the pines. In another instant, a strange ungainly person riding a mare came into view, with as much rapidity as he could.

The frown which had gathered around the brow of Heyward gradually relaxed, and his lips curled into a slight smile, as he regarded the odd-looking stranger. Alice made no very powerful effort to control her merriment; and even the dark, thoughtful eye of Cora lighted with humor.

“Do you seek anyone here?” demanded Heyward, when the other had arrived sufficiently near to lessen his speed. “I trust you are no messenger of bad news?”

“I hear you are riding to Fort William Henry,” replied the stranger. As I am journeying there myself, I concluded good company would seem consistent to the wishes of both parties.”

“You appear to possess the privilege of casting the deciding vote,” returned Heyward; “we are three, while you have consulted no one but yourself.”

“Even so. The first point to be obtained is to know one’s own mind. The next is to act up to the decision. I have endeavored to do both, and here I am.”

“If you journey to the lake, you have mistaken your route,” said Heyward, haughtily; “the highway is at least half a mile behind you.”

“Even so,” returned the stranger, nothing daunted by this cold reception; “I have stayed at Fort Edward

a week and I should be stupid not to have inquired the road I was to journey. My name is David Gamut, and I teach singing!”

“Nay, throw aside that frown, Heyward,” cried Alice, “and in pity to my longing ears, suffer him to journey in our train. Besides,” she added, in a low and hurried voice, casting a glance at Cora, who slowly followed the footsteps of their silent but sullen Indian guide, “it may be a friend added to our strength, in time of need.”

“Do you think, Alice, that I would trust those I love by this secret path, if I imagined such need could happen?”

“No, no, I think not of it now; but this strange man amuses me. And if he has music in his soul, let us not reject his company.” She pointed persuasively along the path while their eyes met. Then yielding to her gentle influence, he clapped his spurs into his charger, and in a few bounds was again at the side of Cora.

Alice remained behind in the company of the strange singing master, who proceeded to show her his abilities by singing aloud.

Such a break in the silence of the forest could not fail to reach the ears of those who journeyed at so short a distance in advance. The Indian muttered a few words in broken English to Heyward, who spoke to the stranger, at once interrupting and closing his musical efforts.

“Though we are not in danger, common wisdom



would teach us to journey through this wilderness in as quiet a manner as possible. You will, then, pardon me, Alice, if I lessen your enjoyments by requesting this gentleman to postpone his song until a safer opportunity.”

He paused and turned his head quickly towards a thicket, and then bent his eyes suspiciously on their Indian guide, who continued his steady pace, in undisturbed gravity. The young man smiled to himself, for he believed he had mistaken some shining berry of the woods for the glistening eyeballs of a prowling savage, and he rode forward, continuing the conversation which had been interrupted by the passing thought.

Major Heyward was mistaken only in allowing his youthful and generous pride to suppress his active watchfulness. The cavalcade had not long passed before the branches of the bushes were cautiously moved aside and a human face, fiercely painted, peered out on the retiring footsteps of the travelers. A gleam of exultation shot across the darkly painted features of the inhabitant of the forest, as he traced the route of his intended victims, who rode unconsciously onward.

## CHAPTER 2

On that day, in a part of the forest not far off, two men were lingering on the banks of a small but rapid stream.

While one of these loiterers showed the red skin and wild dress of a native of the woods, the other exhibited the brighter though sunburnt and long-faded complexion of one who might claim descent from a European parentage. The former's body, which was nearly naked, presented a terrific emblem of death, drawn in intermingled colors of white and black. His closely shaved head, on which no other hair than the well known scalping tuft was preserved, was without ornament of any kind except for a solitary eagle's plume. A tomahawk and a scalping-knife were in his girdle; while a short military rifle lay carelessly across his bare and sinewy knee. The expanded chest, full formed limbs, and grave countenance of this warrior would denote that he had reached the vigor of his days, though no symptoms of decay appeared yet to have weakened his manhood.

The frame of the white man, judging by such parts as were not concealed by his clothes, was that of one who had known hardships and exertion from his earli-

est youth. His person, though muscular, was slender rather than full; but every nerve and muscle appeared hardened by unremitted exposure and toil. The eye of the hunter, or scout, was small, quick, keen, and restless, roving while he spoke, on every side of him as if in quest of game, or distrusting the sudden approach of some lurking enemy.

Chingachgook, chief of the disappearing Mohican tribe, was speaking to the white man. "We Mohicans came from the place where the sun is hid at night, over great plains where the buffaloes live, until we reached the big river. There, Hawkeye, we fought the Alligewi, till the ground was red with their blood. From the banks of the big river to the shores of the salt lake, there was none to meet us. The Hurons followed at a distance. We said the country should be ours from the place where the water runs up no longer on this stream, to a river twenty suns' journey toward the summer. The land we took like warriors, we kept like men. We drove the Hurons into the woods with the bears. They only tasted salt at the licks; they drew no fish from the great lake; we threw them the bones."

"All this I have heard and believe," said the white man, observing that the Indian paused: "but that was long before the English came into the country."

"A pine grew then where this chestnut now stands. The first pale-faces who came among us spoke no English. They came in a large canoe, when my fathers had buried the tomahawk and were at peace with the



redmen around them. Then, Hawkeye," he continued, betraying his deep emotion only by permitting his voice to fall to those low, guttural tones which rendered his language so very musical; "then, Hawkeye, we were one people, and we were happy. The salt lake gave us its fish, the wood its deer, and the air its birds. We worshipped the Great Spirit; and we kept the Hurons beyond the sound of our songs of triumph!"

"But where are to be found those of your race who came to their kin in the Delaware country so many summers ago?" asked Hawkeye.

"Where are the blossoms of those summers! Fallen, one by one: so all of my family departed, each in his turn, to the land of spirits. I am on the hill-top, and must go down into the valley. When Uncas follows in my footsteps, there will no longer be any of the blood of the chiefs, for my boy is the last of the Mohicans."

"Uncas is here!" said another voice, in the same soft guttural tones, near his elbow. "Who speaks to Uncas?"

The white man loosened his knife in his leather sheath, and made an involuntary movement of the hand toward his rifle, at this sudden interruption, but the Indian sat composed, without turning his head at the unexpected sounds.

At the next instant, a youthful warrior passed between them with a noiseless step and seated himself

on the bank of the rapid stream. No exclamation of surprise escaped the father, nor was any question asked or reply given for several minutes. Each appeared to await the moment when he might speak without betraying womanish curiosity or childish impatience. The white man seemed to take counsel from their customs, and relinquishing his grasp of the rifle he also remained silent and reserved. At length Chingachgook turned his eyes slowly towards his son, and demanded, "Do the Hurons dare to leave the print of their moccasins in these woods?"

"I have been on their trail," replied the young Indian, "and know that they number as many as the fingers of my two hands; but they lie hid, like cowards."

"The thieves are waiting for scalps and plunder!" said the scout, whom we shall call Hawkeye.

"'Tis enough!" returned the father, glancing his eye towards the setting sun. "They shall be driven like deer from their bushes. Hawkeye, let us eat to-night and show the Hurons that we are men tomorrow."

"I am as ready to do the one as the other; but to fight the Hurons 'tis necessary to find them first."

"Wait!" ejaculated his companion, turning quickly, like a hound who scented game.

"By the Lord," exclaimed the scout. "What do you hear, Chingachgook? For to my ears the woods are dumb."



“The horses of white men are coming!” returned the other, raising himself with dignity and resuming his seat on the log with his former composure. “Hawkeye, they are your brothers; speak to them.”

“That will I, and in English that the king needn’t be ashamed to answer,” returned the hunter, speaking in the language of which he boasted; “but I see nothing, nor do I hear the sounds of man or beast. Ha! There goes something like the cracking of a dry stick, too—now I hear the bushes move—yes, yes, there is a trampling that I mistook for the falls—and—but here they come themselves; God keep them from the Hurons!”

## CHAPTER 3

The words were still in the mouth of the scout, when the leader of the party came openly into view.

“Who comes?” demanded the scout, throwing his rifle carelessly across his left arm and keeping the forefinger of his right hand on the trigger.

“Believers in religion and friends to the law and to the king,” returned he who rode in front. “Men who have journeyed since the rising sun, in the shades of this forest, without nourishment and are sadly tired of their journeying.”

“You are, then, lost,” interrupted the hunter, “and have found how helpless ’tis not to know whether to take the right hand or the left?”

“Even so. Know you the distance to a fort called William Henry?”

“Hoot!” shouted the scout, who did not spare his open laughter, though he instantly checked the dangerous sounds lest he be overheard by any lurking enemies. “You are off the scent of Fort William Henry, man! If you are friends to the king, and have business with the army, your better way would be to follow the river down to Edward and lay the matter before the English General.”









Before the stranger could make any reply to this unexpected proposition, Major Heyward dashed the bushes aside, and leaped his charger into the pathway in front of his companion.

“What, then, may be our distance from Fort Edward?” demanded the new speaker. “We left Fort Edward this morning, and our destination is the head of the lake.”

“Then you must have lost your eyesight before losing your way, for the road is as grand a path, I calculate, as any that runs into London, or even before the palace of the king himself.”

“We will not dispute concerning the excellence of the passage,” returned Heyward, smiling. “It is enough, for the present, that we trusted to an Indian guide to take us by a nearer, though blinder, path and that we are deceived in his knowledge. In plain words we know not where we are.”

“An Indian lost in the woods!” said the scout, shaking his head doubtfully; “when the sun is scorching the treetops and the water-courses are full; when the moss on every beech he sees will tell in which quarter the north star will shine at night! ’Tis strange that an Indian should be lost between Lake Horican and the bend in the river. Is he a Mohawk?”

“Not by birth, though adopted in that tribe; I think his birthplace was farther north, and he is one of those you call a Huron.”

“What!” exclaimed the two companions of the

scout, who had continued, until this part of the dialogue, seated immovable, and apparently indifferent to what passed. They sprang to their feet with an activity and interest that had evidently got the better of their reserve.

“A Huron!” repeated the sturdy scout, once more shaking his head in open distrust. “They are a thievish race, nor do I care by whom they are adopted. You can never make anything of them but thieves and vagabonds. Since you trusted yourself to the care of one of that nation, I only wonder that you have not fallen in with more.”

“Of that there is little danger, since William Henry is so many miles in our front. You forget that I have told you our guide is now a Mohawk and that he serves with our forces as a friend.”

“And I tell you that he who is born a Huron will die a Huron,” returned the other positively. “A Mohawk! No, give me a Delaware or a Mohican for honesty; and when they will fight, look to a Delaware or a Mohican for a warrior!”

“Enough of this,” said Heyward, impatiently; “I wish not to inquire into the character of a man that I know, and to whom you must be a stranger. You have not yet answered my question. What is our distance from the main army at Edward?”

“It seems that may depend on who is your guide. One would think such a horse as that might get over

a good deal of ground between sun-up and sun-down.”

“I wish no quarrel with you, friend,” said Heyward, curbing his dissatisfied manner and speaking in a more gentle voice; “if you will tell me the distance to Fort Edward and conduct me there, your labor shall not go without its reward.”

“And in so doing, how know I that I don’t guide an enemy and a spy of the French to the works of the army? It is not every man who can speak the English tongue that is an honest subject.”

“If you serve with the troops, of whom I judge you to be a scout, you should know of such a regiment of the king as the 60th.”

“The 60th! You can tell me little of the Royal Americans that I don’t know, though I do wear a hunting-shirt instead of a scarlet jacket.”

“Well, then, among the other things, you may know the name of its major?”

“Its major!” interrupted the hunter, elevating his body like one who was proud of his trust. “If there is a man in the country who knows Major Effingham, he stands before you.”

“It is a corps which has many majors; the gentleman you name is the senior, but I speak of the junior of them all; he who commands the companies in garrison at William Henry.”

“Yes, yes, I have heard that a young gentleman of vast riches, from one of the provinces far south, has



got the place. He is over young, too, to hold such rank, and to be put above older men, and yet they say he is a soldier in his knowledge and a gallant gentleman!"

"Whatever he may be, or however he may be qualified for his rank, he now speaks to you and, of course, can be no enemy to dread."

The scout regarded Heyward in surprise, and then lifting his cap, he answered in a tone less confident than before.

"I have heard a party was to leave the encampment this morning for the lake shore?"

"You have heard the truth; but I preferred a nearer route, trusting to the knowledge of the Indian I mentioned."

"And he deceived you and then deserted?"

"Neither, as I believe; certainly not the latter, for he is to be found in the rear."

"I should like to look at the creature. If he is a true Huron I can tell him by his knavish look, and by his paint," said the scout, stepping past the charger of Heyward and entering the path behind the mare of the singing-master. After shoving aside the bushes and proceeding a few paces, he encountered the girls, who awaited the result of the conference with anxiety.

Behind these, the runner leaned against a tree, where he stood the close examination of the scout with an air unmoved, though with a look so dark and savage that it might in itself excite fear. Satisfied with his scrutiny, the hunter soon left him. As he re-

passed the girls, he paused a moment to gaze upon their beauty, answering to the smile and nod of Alice with a look of open pleasure.

“A Huron is a Huron, and God having made him so, neither the Mohawks nor any other tribe can alter him,” he said, when he had regained his former position. “If we were alone, and you would leave that noble horse at the mercy of the wolves tonight, I could show you the way to Edward, myself, within an hour, for it lies only about an hour’s journey from here, but with such ladies in your company ’tis impossible!”

“And why? They are fatigued, but they are quite equal to a ride of a few more miles.”

“’Tis a natural impossibility!” repeated the scout. “I wouldn’t walk a mile in these woods after night gets into them, in company with that runner, for the best rifle in the colonies. They are full of outlying Hurons, and your mongrel Mohawk knows where to find them too well to be my companion.”

“Think you so?” said Heyward, leaning forward in the saddle and dropping his voice nearly to a whisper. “I confess I have not been without my own suspicions, though I have endeavored to conceal them and affected a confidence I have not always felt on account of my companions. It was because I suspected him that I would follow no longer; making him, as you see, follow me.”

“I knew he was one of the cheats as soon as I laid eyes on him!” returned the scout, placing a finger on

his nose in sign of caution. "The thief is leaning against the foot of the sugar sapling that you can see over the bushes. His right leg is in line with the bark of the tree, and," tapping his rifle, "I can take him from where I stand, between the ankle and the knee, with a single shot, putting an end to his tramping through the woods for at least a month to come. If I should go back to him, the cunning scoundrel would suspect something and be dodging through the trees like a frightened deer."

"It will not do. He may be innocent, and I dislike the act. Though, if I felt confident of his treachery—"

"'Tis a safe thing to calculate on the knavery of a Huron," said the scout, throwing his rifle forward by a sort of instinctive movement.

"Hold!" interrupted Heyward. "It will not do—we must think of some other scheme; and yet, I have much reason to believe the rascal has deceived me."

The hunter, who had already abandoned his intention of wounding the runner, mused a moment, and then made a gesture which instantly brought his two red companions to his side. They spoke together earnestly in the Delaware language, though in an undertone. By the gestures of the white man, which were frequently directed towards the top of the sapling, it was evident he pointed out the situation of their hidden enemy. His companions were not long in comprehending his wishes. Laying aside their fire-arms, they parted, taking opposite sides of the path and burying



themselves in the thicket with such cautious movements that their steps were inaudible.

“Now, go you back,” said the hunter, speaking again to Heyward, “and hold the imp in talk; these Mohicans will take him without breaking his paint.”

“Nay,” said Heyward proudly, “I will seize him myself.”

“What could you do, mounted, against an Indian in the bushes?”

“I will dismount.”

“And, think you, when he saw one of your feet out of the stirrup, he would wait for the other to be free? Whoever comes into the woods to deal with the natives must use Indian fashions if he would wish to prosper in his undertakings. Go, then; talk openly to the miscreant and seem to believe him the truest friend you have on earth.”

Heyward prepared to comply, though with strong disgust at the nature of the office he was compelled to execute. Each moment, however, pressed upon him a conviction of the critical situation in which he had put his party through his own confidence. The sun had already disappeared, and the woods were assuming a dusky hue, which keenly reminded him that the hour the savage usually chose for his most barbarous and remorseless acts of vengeance was speedily drawing near. Stimulated by apprehension he left the scout. In passing his gentler companions Heyward uttered a few words of encouragement and was pleased to find

that, though fatigued with the exercise of the day, they appeared to entertain no suspicion that their present embarrassment was other than the result of accident. Giving them reason to believe he was merely employed in a consultation concerning the future route, he spurred his charger and drew the reins again when the animal had carried him within a few yards of the place where the sullen runner still stood, leaning against the tree.

“You may see, Magua,” he said to the Indian guide, endeavoring to assume an air of freedom and confidence, “that the night is closing around us and yet we are no nearer to William Henry than when we left the encampment of Webb with the rising sun. You have missed the way, nor have I been more fortunate. But happily we have fallen in with a hunter, he whom you hear talking to the singer, who is acquainted with the deerpaths and by-ways of the woods and who promises to lead us to a place where we may rest securely till the morning.”

The Indian riveted his glowing eyes on Heyward as he asked, in his imperfect English, “Is he alone?”

“Alone!” hesitatingly answered Heyward to whom deception was too new to be assumed without embarrassment. “O! Not alone, surely, Magua, for you know that we are with him.

“Then Le Renard Subtil will go,” returned the runner, coolly raising his little wallet from the place where it had lain at his feet; “and the pale-faces will see none but their own color.”

“What do you mean? Whom do you call Le Renard Subtil, or ‘The Sly Fox’?”

“’Tis the French name my Canada fathers have given to me,” returned Magua with an air that manifested his pride at the distinction. “Night is the same as day to me when Munro waits.”

“And what account will you give the chief of William Henry concerning his daughters? Will you dare to tell the hot-blooded Scotsman that his children are left without a guide, though you promised to be one?”

“Though the gray head has a loud voice and a long arm, I will not hear him or feel him in the woods.”

“But what will the Mohawks say? They will make you petticoats, and bid you stay in the wigwam with the women, for you are no longer to be trusted with the business of a man.”

“I know the path to the great lakes, and I can find the bones of my fathers,” was the answer of the unmoved runner.

“Enough, Magua,” said Heyward; “are we not friends? Why should there be bitter words between us? Munro has promised you a gift for your services when performed, and I shall be your debtor for another. Rest your weary limbs, then, and open your wallet to eat. We have a few moments to spare; let us not waste them in talk like quarreling women. When the ladies are refreshed, we will proceed.”

The Indian then fastened his eyes keenly on the open countenance of Heyward, but meeting his glance, he turned them quickly away. Seating himself delib-



erately on the ground, he drew forth the remnant of some former repast and began to eat, though not without first bending his looks slowly and cautiously around him.

“This is well,” continued Heyward; “you will have strength and sight to find the path in the morning.” He paused, for sounds like the snapping of a dried stick, and the rustling of leaves, rose from the adjacent bushes. Recollecting himself instantly, he continued, “We must be moving before the sun is seen, or our French enemies may lie in our path and shut us out from the fortress.”

The hand of Magua dropped from his mouth to his side, and though his eyes were fastened on the ground, his head was turned aside with his nostrils expanded. His ears seemed even to stand more erect than usual, giving to him the appearance of a statue that was made to represent intense attention.

Heyward, who watched his movements with a vigilant eye, carelessly extricated one of his feet from the stirrup, while he passed a hand towards the bear-skin covering of his holsters. While he hesitated how to proceed, Magua cautiously raised himself to his feet, though with a motion so slow and guarded that not the slightest noise was produced by the change. Heyward felt it had now become incumbent on him to act. Throwing his leg over the saddle, he dismounted with a determination to advance and seize his treacherous companion, trusting the result to his own manhood.

In order, however, to prevent unnecessary alarm, he still preserved an air of calmness and friendship.

“Le Renard Subtil does not eat,” he said, using the name which seemed most flattering to the vanity of the Indian. “His corn is not well parched and it seems dry. Let me examine; perhaps something may be found among my own provisions that will help his appetite.”

Magua held out the wallet to the proffer of the other. He even suffered their hands to meet, without betraying the least emotion, or varying his riveted attitude of attention. But when he felt the fingers of Heyward moving gently along his own naked arm, he struck up the limb of the young man, and uttering a piercing cry as he darted beneath it, plunged at a single bound into the opposite thicket. At the next instant the form of Chingachgook appeared from the bushes, looking like a specter in its paint and glided across the path in swift pursuit. Next followed the shout of Uncas, when the woods were lighted by a sudden gash that was accompanied by the sharp report of the hunter's rifle.

## CHAPTER 4

The suddenness of the flight of his guide and the wild cries of the pursuers caused Heyward to remain fixed for a few moments in inactive surprise. Then recollecting the importance of securing the fugitive, he dashed aside the surrounding bushes, and pressed eagerly forward to lend his aid in the chase. Before he had, however, proceeded a hundred yards, he met the three foresters already returning from their unsuccessful pursuit.

“Why so soon disheartened!” he exclaimed. “The scoundrel must be concealed behind some of these trees, and may yet be captured. We are not safe while he goes at large.”

“Would you set a cloud to chase the wind?” returned the disappointed scout. “I heard the imp brushing over the dry leaves like a black snake. Catching a glimpse of him, I fired. Look at this sumach; its leaves are red, though everybody knows the fruit is still yellow in the month of July.”

“’Tis the blood of Le Subtil! He is hurt, and may yet fall!”

“No, no,” returned the scout, “I rubbed the bark off a limb, perhaps, but the creature leaped the longer for it. A rifle-bullet acts on a running animal, when it



barks him, much the same as one of your spurs on a horse; that is, it quickens motion and puts life into the flesh instead of taking it away."

"We are four able bodies to one wounded man!"

"Is life grievous to you?" interrupted the scout. "Yonder red devil would draw you within swing of the tomahawks of his comrades before you were heated in the chase. It was an unthoughtful act in me to fire within sound of an ambushment! but then it was a natural temptation! 'Twas very natural! Come, friends, let us move our station and in such a fashion, too, as will throw the cunning of a Huron on a wrong scent, or our scalps will be drying in the wind in front of an Indian camp tomorrow."

This appalling declaration, which the scout uttered with cool assurance, reminded Heyward of the importance of the charge with which he himself had been intrusted. Glancing his eyes around with a vain effort to pierce the gloom, he felt as if his unresisting companions would soon lie at the mercy of those barbarous enemies who like beasts of prey only waited till the gathering darkness might render their blows more fatally certain.

"What is to be done?" he said, feeling the utter helplessness of doubt in such a pressing strait. "Desert me not, for God's sake! Defend those I escort and freely name your own reward!"

"Offer your prayers to Him who can give us wisdom to outwit the devils who fill these woods," calmly

interrupted the scout, "but spare your offers of money. First you must promise two things, both in your own name and for your friends."

"Name them."

"The one is to be still as these sleeping woods, let what will happen; and the other is to keep the place where we shall take you forever a secret from all mortal men."

"I will do my utmost to see both these conditions fulfilled."

"Then follow, for we are losing moments that are as precious as the heart's blood to a stricken deer!"

Heyward could distinguish the impatient gesture of the scout, through the increasing shadows of the evening, and he moved swiftly towards the place where he had left the remainder of his party. When they rejoined the anxious girls, he briefly acquainted them with the conditions of their new guide and with the necessity for quiet.

"What to do with these dumb creatures!" muttered Hawkeye, glancing at the horses. "It would be time lost to cut their throats and cast them into the river; to leave them here would be to tell the Hurons that they had not far to seek their owners!"

"Then give them their bridles and let them range the woods," Heyward ventured to suggest.

"No, it would be better to mislead the imps and make them believe they must equal a horse's speed to run down their chase. Hist? What stirs the bush?"

"The colt."

“That colt, at least, must die,” muttered the scout, grasping the mane of the nimble beast, which easily eluded his hand. “Uncas, your arrows!”

“Hold!” exclaimed David Gamut, the owner of the condemned animal. “Spare the colt!”

“When men struggle for the single life God has given them,” said the scout sternly, “even their own kind seem no more than the beasts of the wood. If you speak again, I shall leave you to the mercy of the Hurons! Draw to your arrow’s head, Uncas. We have no time for second blows.”

The low, muttering sounds of his threatening voice were still audible, when the wounded foal, first rearing on its hind legs, plunged forward to its knees. It was met by Chingachgook, whose knife passed across its throat quicker than thought. Then he dashed it into the river, down whose stream it glided away, gasping audibly for breath with its ebbing life. This deed of apparent cruelty, but of real necessity, fell upon the spirits of the travelers like a terrific warning of the peril in which they stood. The sisters shuddered and clung closer to each other, while Heyward instinctively laid his hand on one of the pistols he had just drawn from their holsters, as he placed himself between the girls and those dense shadows that seemed to draw an impenetrable veil before the bosom of the forest.

The Indians, however, hesitated not a moment, but taking the bridles they led the frightened and reluctant horses into the bed of the river.



At a short distance from the shore they turned and moved in a direction opposite to the course of the waters. In the meantime, the scout drew a canoe of bark from its place of concealment beneath some low bushes into which he silently motioned the girls to enter. They complied without hesitation, though many a fearful and anxious glance was thrown behind them towards the thickening gloom which now lay like a dark barrier along the margin of the stream.

As soon as Cora and Alice were seated, the scout directed Heyward to support one side of the frail vessel, and posting himself at the other they bore it up against the stream. In this manner they proceeded for many rods in a silence that was only interrupted by the rippling of the water, as its eddies played around them, or the low dash made by their own cautious footsteps. At length they reached a point in the river, where the roving eye of Heyward became riveted on a cluster of black objects, collected at a spot where the high bank threw a deeper shadow than usual on the dark waters. Hesitating to advance, he pointed out the place to the attention of his companion.

“Ay,” returned the composed scout, “the Indians have hidden the beasts with the judgment of natives! Water leaves no trail, and an owl’s eyes would be blinded by the darkness of such a hole.”

The whole party was soon reunited, and another consultation was held between the scout and his new comrades. The scout directed Heyward and his fellow-travelers to seat themselves in the forward end







of the canoe and took possession of the other himself, as erect and steady as if he floated in a vessel of much firmer materials. The Indians warily retraced their steps towards the place they had left, when the scout, placing his pole against a rock, by a powerful shove set his frail bark directly into the center of the turbulent stream. For many minutes the struggle between the light bubble in which they floated and the swift current was severe and doubtful. Forbidden to stir even a hand and almost afraid to breathe, the passengers watched the glancing waters in feverish suspense. Twenty times they thought the whirling eddies were sweeping them to destruction, when the master-hand of their pilot would bring the bows of the canoe to stem the rapid. At long last a vigorous and desperate effort closed the struggle. Just as Alice veiled her eyes in horror, under the impression that they were about to be swept within the whirlpool at the foot of the waterfall, the canoe floated, stationary, at the side of a flat rock that lay on a level with the water.

“Where are we and what is next to be done?” demanded Heyward, perceiving that the exertions of the scout had ceased.

“You are at the foot of Glenn’s Fall,” returned the other, speaking aloud, without fear of consequences, within the roar of the cataract. “The next thing is to make a steady landing, lest the canoe upset, and you should go down again the hard road we have traveled, faster than you came up.”

His passengers gladly complied with these directions.

“We are now fortified, garrisoned, and provisioned,” cried Heyward cheerfully, “and may defy the French Montcalm and his Indian allies. How, now, my vigilant sentinel, can you see anything of the Hurons?”

“An Indian is a mortal to be felt before he is seen,” returned the scout, ascending the rock. “I trust to other signs than such as come in at the eye, when I am on the trail of the Hurons.”

“Do your ears tell you that they have traced our retreat?”

“I should be sorry to think they had, though this is a spot that stout courage might hold for a sharp struggle. I will not deny, however, that the horses cowered when I passed them, as though they scented wolves; and a wolf is a beast that is apt to hover about an Indian ambushment.”

The scout, while making his remarks, was busied in collecting certain necessary implements. As he concluded, he moved silently by the group of travelers, accompanied by the Mohicans, who seemed to comprehend his intentions with instinctive readiness. Then all three disappeared in succession, seeming to vanish against the dark face of a perpendicular rock that rose to the height of a few yards near the water's edge.

## CHAPTER 5

Smothered voices were next heard, as though men called to each other in the bowels of the earth, when a sudden light flashed upon those outside and laid bare the much-prized secret of the place. The fire, started by Hawkeye and the Indians, illuminated the cave they were in.

“Are we quite safe in this cavern?” demanded Heyward. “Is there no danger of surprise? A single armed man, at its entrance, would hold us at his mercy.”

A ghostly-looking figure stalked from out the darkness behind the scout, and seizing a blazing brand held it towards the farther extremity of their place of retreat. Alice uttered a faint shriek, and even Cora rose to her feet, as this appalling object moved into the light. A single word from Heyward calmed them with the assurance it was only their attendant Chingachgook, who revealed that the cavern had two outlets.

“Old foxes like Chingachgook and me are not often caught in a burrow with one hole,” said Hawkeye, laughing.

The meal, which was greatly aided by the addition



of a few delicacies that Heyward had had the foresight to bring with him when they left their horses, was exceedingly refreshing to the wearied party. Uncas acted as attendant to the girls, performing all the little offices within his power, with a mixture of dignity and anxious grace. Had there been one there sufficiently disengaged to become a close observer, he might have fancied that the services of the young chief were not entirely impartial. While he tendered to Alice the water and the venison with sufficient courtesy, in performing the same offices for her sister his dark eye lingered on her rich, expressive countenance.

In the meanwhile, the gravity of Chingachgook remained immovable. The fierceness of his countenance now seemed to slumber, and in its place was to be seen the quiet, vacant composure, which distinguishes an Indian warrior. On the other hand, the quick, roving eye of the scout seldom rested. He ate and drank with an appetite that no sense of danger could disturb, but his vigilance seemed never to desert him. Twenty times the cup or venison was suspended before his lips, while his head was turned aside, as though he listened to some distant and distrusted sounds.

“Come, friend,” said Hawkeye at last, drawing out a keg from beneath a cover of leaves and addressing the stranger, David Gamut, who sat at his elbow, “try a little spruce; ’twill wash away all thoughts of your

colt. I drink to our better friendships, hoping that a little horse-flesh may leave no heartburnings between us. How do you name yourself?"

"Gamut—David Gamut," returned the singing-master, preparing to wash down his sorrows in a powerful draught.

"A very good name, and, I dare say, handed down from honest forefathers. I'm an admirer of names, though the Christian fashions fall far below the savage customs in this particular. The biggest coward I ever knew was called Lyon; and his wife Patience would scold you out of hearing in less time than a hunted deer would run a rod. With an Indian 'tis a matter of conscience. What he calls himself, he generally is—not that Chingachgook, which signifies 'Big Serpent,' is really a snake, big or little; but that he understands the windings and turnings of human nature and is silent and strikes his enemies when they least expect him. What may be your calling?"

"I am an unworthy instructor in the art of singing."

"You might be better employed. Can you use the smooth bore or handle the rifle?"

"Praised be God, I have never had occasion to meddle with murderous implements!"

"Let us hear what you can do in singing, for 'tis time that these ladies should be getting strength for the morning, before the Hurons are stirring!"

“With joyful pleasure do I consent,” said David, adjusting his iron-rimmed spectacles and producing his beloved little volume.

The singer was dwelling on a low, dying chord when a cry that seemed neither human nor earthly rose, penetrating not only the recesses of the cavern, but to the inmost hearts of all who heard it. It was followed by a stillness apparently as deep as if the waters had been checked in their furious progress at such a horrid and unusual interruption.

“What is it?” murmured Alice, after a few moments of terrible suspense.

“What is it?” repeated Heyward aloud.

Neither Hawkeye nor the Indians made any reply. They listened, as if expecting the sound would be repeated, with a manner that expressed their own astonishment. At length they spoke together earnestly in the Delaware language. Then Uncas cautiously left the cavern. When he had gone, the scout first spoke in English.

“What it is, or what it is not, none here can tell; though two of us have ranged the woods for more than thirty years! I did believe there was no cry that Indians or beast could make that my ears had not heard; but this has proved that I was only a vain and conceited mortal!”

“Was it not, then, the shout the warriors make when they wish to frighten their enemies?” asked Cora.



“No, no; this was bad and shocking and had a sort of unhuman sound; but when you once hear the war-whoop, you will never mistake it for anything else! Well, Uncas!” speaking in Delaware to the young chief as he reentered, “what do you see? Do our lights shine through the blankets?”

The answer was short, being given in the same tongue.

“There is nothing to be seen outside,” continued Hawkeye, shaking his head in discontent; “and our hiding-place is still in darkness! Pass into the other cave, you that need it and seek for sleep. We must be afoot long before the sun and make the most of our time to get to Edward, while the Hurons are taking their morning nap.”

Cora obeyed with a steadiness that taught the more timid Alice the necessity of obedience.

## CHAPTER 6

Scarcely had the party begun to take its rest in this fashion, however, before the same strong horrid cry, as before, filled the air.

“’Twould be neglecting a warning that is given for our good to lie hid any longer,” said Hawkeye, “when such sounds are raised in the forest! The girls may keep close to the cave, but the Mohicans and I will watch upon the rock.”

“It is extraordinary!” said Heyward, taking his pistols from the place where he had laid them on entering. “Whether it is a sign of peace or a signal of war, it must be looked to. Lead the way, my friend; I follow.”

On issuing from their place of confinement, the whole party instantly experienced a grateful revival of spirits, by exchanging the air of the hiding-place for the cool and invigorating atmosphere which played around the whirlpools and pitches of the cataract. With the exception of the sounds produced by the rushing waters the scene was as still as night and solitude could make it. In vain were the eyes of each individual bent along the opposite shores in quest of some signs of life that might explain the interruption

they had heard. Their anxious and eager looks were baffled by the deceptive light, or rested only on naked rocks and straight and immovable trees.

"There is nothing to be seen but the gloom and quiet of a lovely evening," whispered Duncan.

"Listen!" interrupted Alice.

The caution was unnecessary. Once more the same sound arose, as if from the bed of the river, and was heard undulating through the forest in distant and dying echoes.

"Can any here give a name to such a cry?" demanded Hawkeye, when the last echo was lost in the woods. "If so, let him speak; for myself, I judge it not to belong to earth!"

"Here, then, is one who can tell you," said Duncan; "I know the sound full well, for often have I heard it on the field of battle, and in situations which are frequent in a soldier's life. 'Tis the horrid shriek that a horse will give in his agony; oftener drawn from him in pain, though sometimes in terror. My steed is either a prey to the beasts of the forest, or he sees his danger without the power to avoid it. The sound might deceive me in the cavern, but in the open air I know it too well to be wrong."

The scout and his companions listened to this simple explanation with interest.

"I cannot deny your words," said Hawkeye; "for I am little skilled in horses, though born where they abound. The wolves must be hovering above their



heads on the bank, and the timid creatures are calling on man for help in the best manner they are able. Uncas,"—he spoke in Delaware—"Uncas, drop down in the canoe, and whirl a burning brand among the pack; or fear may do what the wolves can't get at to perform, and leave us without horses in the morning."

The young native had already descended to the water to comply when a long howl was raised on the edge of the river, as though the wolves of their own accord were abandoning their prey in sudden terror. Uncas with instinctive quickness drew back, and the three foresters held another of their low, earnest conferences.

"We have been like hunters who have lost the points of the heavens and from whom the sun has been hid for days," said Hawkeye, turning away from his companions; "now we begin again to know the signs of our course. Seat yourselves in the shade which the moon throws from yonder beech—'tis thicker than that of the pines. Let all our conversation be in whispers; though it would be better to speak not at all."

Hours passed by without further interruption. The moon reached the zenith and shed its mild light perpendicularly on the lovely sight of the sisters slumbering peacefully in each other's arms. David began to utter sounds that would have shocked his delicate ears in more wakeful moments. In short, all but Hawkeye and the Mohicans lost every idea of conscious-

ness in uncontrollable drowsiness; but the watchfulness of these vigilant protectors neither tired nor slumbered. They sat immovable as a rock, with their eyes roving without intermission along the dark margin of trees that bounded the adjacent shores of the narrow stream. Not a sound escaped them. It was evident that this caution proceeded from an experience that no subtlety on the part of their enemies could deceive. Their caution was, however, continued without any apparent consequences until the moon had set and a pale streak above the tree-tops at the bend of the river a little below announced the approach of day.

Then for the first time Hawkeye was seen to stir. He crawled along the rock and shook Duncan from his heavy slumbers.

“Now is the time to journey,” he whispered; “awake the girls and be ready to get into the canoe when I bring it to the landing-place.”

“Have you had a quiet night?” said Heyward. “For myself, I believe sleep has got the better of my vigilance.”

“All is yet still as midnight. Be silent, but be quick.”

By this time Duncan was thoroughly awake, and he immediately declared, “Cora! Alice! Awake! The hour has come to move!”

A loud shriek from the younger of the sisters was the unexpected answer he received. While the words were still on the lips of Heyward, there had arisen such a tumult of yells and cries as served to drive the

swift currents of his own blood back into the fountains of his heart. It seemed, for nearly a minute, as if the demons of hell had possessed themselves of the air about them and were venting their savage humors in barbarous sounds. The cries came from no particular direction, though it was evident they filled the woods, and as the appalled listeners easily imagined, the caverns of the falls, the rocks, the bed of the river, and the upper air. David raised his tall person in the midst of the infernal din, with a hand on either ear, exclaiming—

“Where does this discord come from? Has hell broken loose that man should utter sounds like these!”

The bright flashes and the quick reports of a dozen rifles from the opposite banks of the stream followed this incautious exposure of his person and left the unfortunate singing-master senseless on that rock where he had been so long slumbering. The Mohicans boldly sent back the intimidating yell of their enemies, who raised a shout of savage triumph at the fall of Gamut. The flash of rifles was then quick and close between them, but either party was too well skilled to leave even a limb exposed to the hostile aim. Duncan listened with intense anxiety for the strokes of the paddle, believing that flight was now their only refuge. The river glanced by with its ordinary velocity, but the canoe was nowhere to be seen on its dark waters. He had just fancied they were cruelly deserted by the scout, when a stream of flame issued from the rock beneath him, and a fierce yell, blended with a shriek,



of agony, announced that the fatal weapon of Hawkeye had found a victim. At this slight repulse the assailants withdrew and gradually the place became as still as before the sudden tumult.

Duncan seized the favorable moment to spring to the body of Gamut, which he bore within the shelter of the narrow chasm that protected the sisters. In another minute the whole party was collected in this spot of comparative safety.

“The poor fellow has saved his scalp,” said Hawkeye, coolly passing his hand over the head of David; “but he is a proof that a man may be born with too long a tongue! ’Twas downright madness to show six feet of flesh and blood on a naked rock to the raging savages. I only wonder he has escaped with life.”

“Is he not dead!” demanded Cora, in a voice whose husky tones showed how powerfully natural horror struggled with her assumed firmness. “Can we do anything to assist the poor man?”

“No, no! The life is in his heart yet, and after he has slept awhile he will come to himself and be a wiser man for it,” returned Hawkeye, casting another glance at the insensible body. “Carry him in, Uncas. The longer his nap lasts the better it will be for him, as I doubt whether we can find a proper cover for such a shape on these rocks; and singing won’t do any good with the Hurons.”

“You believe, then, the attack will be renewed?” asked Heyward.

“Do I expect a hungry wolf will satisfy his craving with a mouthful! They have lost a man, and 'tis their fashion, when they meet a loss and fail in the surprise, to fall back; but we shall have them on again, with new efforts to take our scalps. Our main hope,” he continued, “will be to keep the rock until Munro can send a party to our help! God send it may be soon and under a leader that knows the Indian customs!”

“You hear our probable fortunes, Cora,” said Duncan, “and you know we have everything to hope from the anxiety and experience of your father. Come, then, with Alice, into this cavern, where you, at least, will be safe from the murderous rifles of our enemies.”

The sisters followed him into the outer cave, where David was beginning, by his sighs, to give symptoms of returning consciousness. Then commending the wounded man to their attention, he left them and joined the scout and his companions, who still lay within the protection of the little chasm between the two caves.

“I tell you, Uncas,” said Hawkeye, as Heyward joined them, “you are wasteful of your powder, and the kick of your rifle disconcerts your aim! Little powder, light lead, and a long arm seldom fail to bring the death screech from a Huron! At least, such has been my experience with the creatures. Come, friends, let us to our covers, for no man can tell when or where a Huron will strike his blow.”

The Indians silently withdrew to their appointed

stations, which were fissures in the rocks from which they could command the approaches to the foot of the falls. As the day had now dawned, the opposite shores no longer presented a confused outline, but they were able to look into the woods and distinguish objects beneath the canopy of gloomy pines.

A long and anxious watch succeeded, but without any further evidences of a renewed attack; and Duncan began to hope that their fire had proved more fatal than was supposed and that their enemies had been effectually repulsed. When he ventured to utter this impression to his companion, it was met by Hawk-eye with an incredulous shake of the head.

“You know not the nature of a Huron if you think he is so easily beaten back without a scalp!” he answered. “If there was one of the imps yelling this morning, there were forty! And they know our number and quality too well to give up the chase so soon. Hist! Look into the water above, just where it breaks over the rocks. The risky devils have swum down and, as bad luck would have it, they have hit the head of the island. Hist! Man, keep close! Or the hair will be off your crown in the turning of a knife!”

Heyward lifted his head from the cover and beheld what he justly considered a deed of rashness and skill. The river had worn away the edge of the soft rock in such a manner as to render its first drop less abrupt and perpendicular than is usual at waterfalls. With no other guide than the ripple of the stream



where it met the head of the island, a party of their insatiable foes had ventured into the current and swum down upon this point, knowing the ready access it would give, if successful, to their intended victims. As Hawkeye ceased speaking, four human heads could be seen peering above a few logs of driftwood that had lodged on these naked rocks, and which had probably suggested the idea of the practicability of the hazardous undertaking. At the next moment, a fifth form was seen floating over the green edge of the fall, a little from the line of the island. The savage struggled powerfully to gain the point of safety, and, favored by the glancing water, he was already stretching forth an arm to meet the grasp of his companion, when he shot away again with the whirling current. He appeared to rise into the air, with uplifted arms and starting eyeballs, and fell with a sullen plunge into that deep and yawning abyss over which he hovered. A single wild, despairing shriek rose from the cavern, and all was hushed again, as the grave.

The first generous impulse of Duncan was to rush to the rescue of the unlucky wretch; but he felt himself bound to the spot by the iron grasp of the immovable scout.

“Would you bring certain death upon us by telling the Hurons where we lie?” demanded Hawkeye sternly. “’Tis a charge of powder saved, and ammunition is as precious now as breath to a worried deer! Freshen the priming of your pistols—the mist of the

falls is apt to dampen the brimstone—and stand firm for a close struggle while I fire on their rush.”

He placed his finger in his mouth and drew a long, shrill whistle, which was answered from the rocks that were guarded by the Mohicans. Duncan caught glimpses of heads above the scattered driftwood, as this signal rose on the air, but they disappeared again as suddenly as they had glanced upon his sight. A low, rustling sound next drew his attention behind him, and turning his head, he beheld Uncas within a few feet, creeping to his side. Hawkeye spoke to him in Delaware, when the young chief took his position with singular caution and undisturbed coolness. To Heyward this was a moment of feverish and impatient suspense.

Suddenly there came a warning signal from Uncas.

“I see them, boy, I see them!” continued Hawkeye. “They are gathering for the rush, or they would keep their dingy backs below the logs. Well, let them,” he added, examining his flint. “The leading man certainly comes on to his death, though it should be General Montcalm himself!”

At that moment the woods were filled with another burst of cries, and at the signal four savages sprang from the cover of the driftwood. Heyward felt a burning desire to rush forward to meet them, so intense was the delirious anxiety of the moment; but he was restrained by the deliberate examples of the scout and Uncas. When their foes, who leaped over the

black rock that divided them were within a few yards, the rifle of Hawkeye slowly rose among the shrubs and poured out its fatal contents. The foremost Indian bounded like a stricken deer and fell headlong among the clefts of the island.

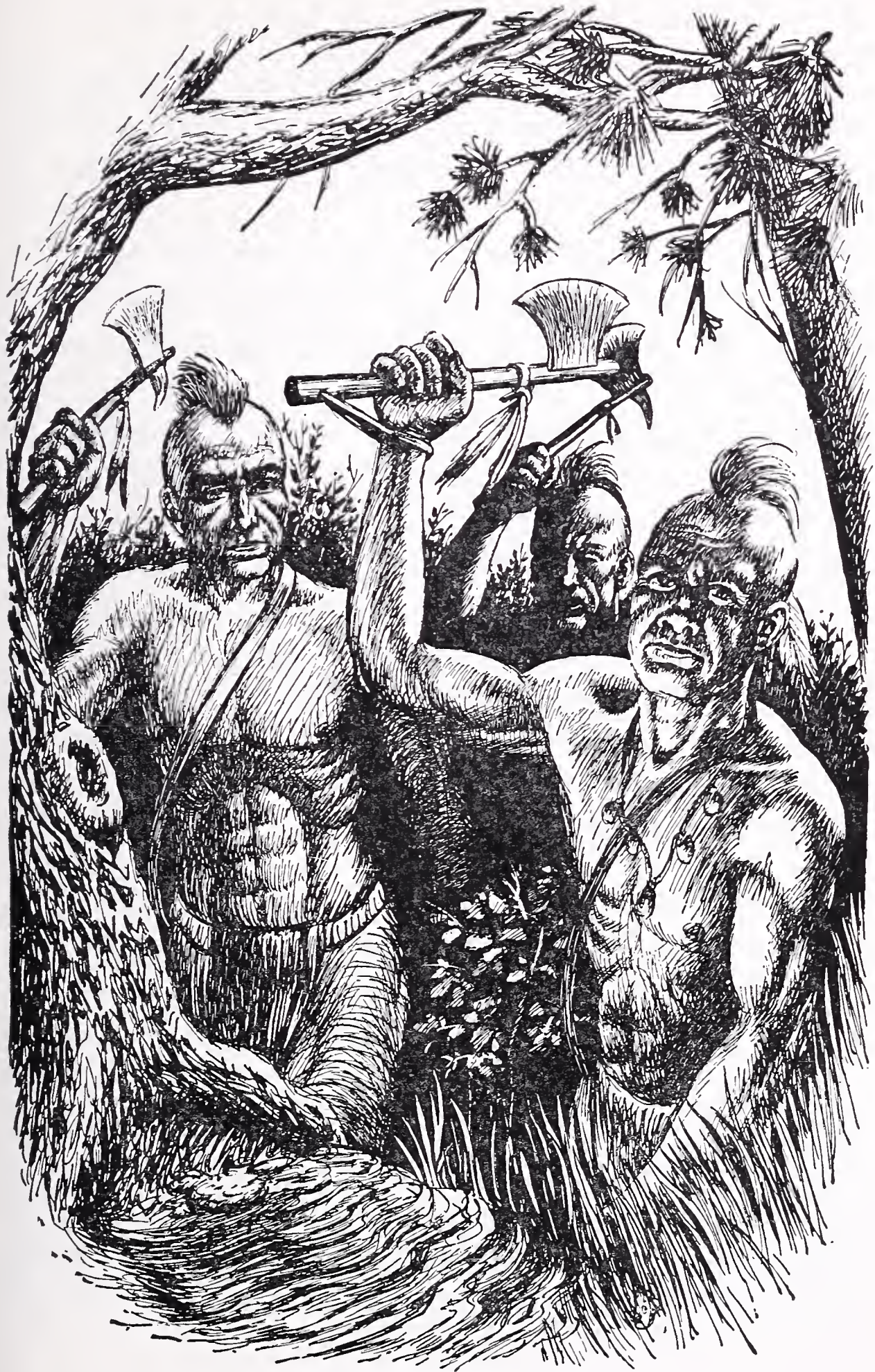
“Now, Uncas!” cried the scout, drawing his long knife, while his quick eyes began to flash with ardor. “Take the last of the screeching imps; of the other two we are certain.”

He was obeyed; and but two enemies remained to be overcome. Heyward had given one of his pistols to Hawkeye, and together they rushed down a little slope towards their foes. They discharged their weapons at the same instant and equally without success.

“I knew it!” muttered the scout, whirling the despised little implement over the falls with bitter disdain. “Come on, you bloody minded hell-hounds!”

The words were barely uttered when he encountered a savage of gigantic stature and of the fiercest appearance. At the same moment Duncan found himself engaged with the other in a similar contest of hand to hand. With ready skill Hawkeye and his antagonist each grasped that uplifted arm of the other which held the dangerous knife. For near a minute they stood looking one another in the eye and gradually exerting the power of their muscles for the mastery. At length, the toughened sinews of the white man prevailed over the less practised limbs of the native. The arm of the latter slowly gave way before









the increasing force of the scout, who, suddenly wresting his armed hand from the grasp of the foe, drove the sharp weapon through his naked bosom to the heart.

In the meantime Heyward had been pressed in a more deadly struggle. His slight sword was snapped in the first encounter. As he was without any other means of defense, his safety now depended entirely on bodily strength and resolution. Though deficient in neither of these qualities, he had met an enemy every way his equal. Happily, he soon succeeded in disarming his adversary, whose knife fell on the rock at their feet. From this moment it became a fierce struggle, who should cast the other over the dizzy height into a neighboring cavern of the falls. Every successive struggle brought them nearer to the edge where Duncan perceived the final and conquering effort must be made. Each of the combatants threw all his energies into that effort, and the result was that both tottered on the brink of the precipice. Heyward felt the grasp of the other at his throat and saw the grim smile the savage gave under the revengeful hope that he hurried his enemy to a fate similar to his own. He felt his body slowly yielding to a resistless power, and the young man experienced the passing agony of such a moment in all its horrors. At that instant of extreme danger, a dark hand and glancing knife appeared before him. The Indian released his hold, as the blood flowed freely from around the sev-



eral tendons of the wrist. While Duncan was drawn backward by the saving arm of Uncas, his charmed eyes were still riveted on the fierce and disappointed countenance of his foe, who fell sullenly and disappointed down the precipice.

“To cover! To cover!” cried Hawkeye, who just then had despatched the enemy. “To cover, for your lives! The work is but half ended!”

The young Mohican gave a shout of triumph, and, followed by Duncan, he glided up the slope they had descended to the combat and sought the friendly shelter of the rocks and shrubs.

## CHAPTER 7

The warning call of the scout was not uttered without reason. During the occurrence of the deadly encounter just related, the roar of the falls was unbroken by any human sound whatever. It would seem that interest in the result had kept the natives on the opposite shores in breathless suspense, while the quick turns and swift changes in the position of the combatants effectually prevented a fire that might prove dangerous alike to friend and enemy. But the moment the struggle was decided, a yell arose as fierce and savage as wild and revengeful passions could throw into the air. It was followed by the swift flashes of the rifles, which sent their leaden messengers across the rock in volleys.

A steady though deliberate return was made from the rifle of Chingachgook, who had maintained his post throughout the struggle with unmoved resolution. When the triumphant shout of Uncas was borne to his ears, the gratified father raised his voice in a single responsive cry, after which his busy weapon alone proved that he still guarded his pass with unwearied diligence. In this manner many minutes flew by with the swiftness of thought, the rifles of the as-

sailants speaking at times in rattling volleys, and at others, in occasional, scattering shots. Though the rock, the trees, and the shrubs were cut and torn in a hundred places around the besieged, their cover was so close and so rigidly maintained that as yet David had been the only sufferer in their little band.

“Let them burn their powder,” said the deliberate scout, while bullet after bullet whizzed by the place where he securely lay; “there will be a fine gathering of lead when it is over, and I fancy the imps will tire of the sport before these old stones cry for mercy! Uncas, boy, you waste shots by overcharging: a kicking rifle never carries a true bullet. I told you to take that devil under the line of white paint. Now, if your bullet went a hair’s breadth, it went two inches above it.”

A quiet smile lighted the haughty features of the young Mohican, betraying his knowledge of the English language, as well as of the other’s meaning; but he suffered it to pass without a reply.

“I cannot permit you to accuse Uncas of want of judgment or of skill,” said Duncan; “he saved my life in the coolest and readiest manner, and he has made a friend who never will require to be reminded of the debt he owes.”

Uncas partly raised his body and offered his hand to the grasp of Heyward. During this act of friendship the two young men exchanged looks of intelligence which caused Duncan to forget the character



and condition of his wild associate. In the meantime, Hawkeye, who looked on this burst of youthful feeling with a cool but kind regard, made the following reply:—

“Life is an obligation which friends often owe each other in the wilderness. I dare say I may have served Uncas some such turn myself before now; and I very well remember that he has stood between me and death five different times; three times from the Hurons, once in crossing Horican, and—”

“That bullet was better aimed than common!” exclaimed Duncan, involuntarily shrinking from a shot which struck the rock at his side with a sharp rebound.

Hawkeye laid his hand on the shapeless metal and shook his head as he examined it, saying, “Falling lead is never flattened! Had it come from the clouds this might have happened!”

But the rifle of Uncas was deliberately raised towards the heavens, directing his companions to a point where the mystery was immediately explained. A ragged oak grew on the right bank of the river, nearly opposite to their position. Its upper branches overhung that arm of the stream which flowed nearest to its own shore. Among the topmost leaves, which scantily concealed the gnarled and stunted limbs, a savage was nestled, partly exposed, as though looking down upon them to ascertain the effect produced by his treacherous aim.

“These devils will scale heaven to circumvent us to our ruin,” said Hawkeye. “Keep him in play, boy, until I can bring my rifle ‘Killdeer’ to bear, when we will try him on each side of the tree at once.”

Uncas delayed his fire until the scout uttered the word. The rifles flashed; the leaves and the bark of the oak flew into the air and were scattered by the wind, but the Indian answered their assault by a taunting laugh, sending down upon them another bullet, which struck the cap of Hawkeye from his head. Once more the savage yells burst out of the woods, and the leaden hail whistled above the heads of the besieged.

“This must be looked to!” said the scout, glancing about him with an anxious eye. “Uncas, call your father; we have need of all our weapons to bring the cunning varmint from his roost.”

The signal was instantly given; and, before Hawkeye had reloaded his rifle, they were joined by Chingachgook. When his son pointed out to the experienced warrior the situation of their dangerous enemy, the usual exclamatory “Hugh!” burst from his lips. After this no further expression of surprise or alarm escaped him. Hawkeye and the Mohicans conversed earnestly together in Delaware for a few moments, when each quietly took his post to execute the plan they had speedily devised.

The warrior in the oak had maintained a quick, though ineffectual fire, from the moment of his dis-

covery. But his aim was interrupted by the vigilance of his enemies, whose rifles instantaneously bore on any part of his person that was left exposed. Still his bullets fell in the center of the crouching party. The clothes of Heyward, which rendered him peculiarly conspicuous, were repeatedly cut, and once blood was drawn from a slight wound in his arm.

At length, emboldened by the long and patient watchfulness of his enemies, the Huron attempted a better and more fatal aim. The quick eye of the Mohicans caught the dark line of his lower limbs incautiously exposed through the thin foliage, a few inches from the trunk of the tree. Their rifles made a common report. Part of the body of the savage came into view. Swift as thought, Hawkeye seized the advantage and discharged his fatal weapon into the top of the oak. The leaves were unusually agitated; the dangerous rifle fell from its commanding elevation, and after a few moments of vain struggling, the form of the savage was seen swinging in the wind, while he still grasped a ragged and naked branch of the tree, with hands clenched in desperation.

“Give him, in pity, give him the contents of another rifle!” cried Duncan, turning away his eyes in horror from the spectacle of a fellow-creature in such awful peril.

“Not a kernel!” exclaimed the obdurate Hawkeye. “His death is certain, and we have no powder to spare, for Indian fights sometimes last for days. ’Tis their



scalps or ours! And God, who made us, has put into our natures the craving to keep the skin on the head!"

Against this stern and unyielding morality, supported as it was by such visible policy, there was no appeal. From that moment the yells in the forest once more ceased; the fire was suffered to decline, and all eyes, those of friends as well as enemies, became fixed on the hopeless condition of the wretch who was dangling between heaven and earth. The body yielded to the currents of air, and though no murmur or groan escaped the victim, there were instants when he grimly faced his foes, and the anguish and cold despair might be traced on his swarthy face. Three times the scout raised his piece in mercy, and silently lowered it again. At length one hand of the Huron lost its hold, and dropped exhausted to his side. A desperate and fruitless struggle to recover the branch succeeded, and then the savage was seen for a fleeting instant, grasping wildly at the empty air. The lightning is not quicker than was the flame from the rifle of Hawkeye. The limbs of the victim trembled and contracted; the head fell to the bosom, and the body parted the foaming waters like lead. The water closed about it, and every trace of the unhappy Huron was lost forever.

No shout of triumph succeeded this important advantage, but even the Mohicans gazed at each other in silent horror. A single yell burst from the woods, and all was again still. Hawkeye, who alone appeared

to reason on the occasion, shook his head at his own momentary weakness, even uttering his self-disapprobation aloud.

“’Twas the last bullet in my pouch, and ’twas the act of a boy!” he said. “What matter it whether he struck the rock living or dead? Feeling would soon be over. Uncas, lad, go down to the canoe and bring up the big horn. It is all the powder we have left, and we shall need it to the last grain, or I am ignorant of the Huron’s nature.”

The young Mohican complied, leaving the scout turning over the useless contents of his pouch and shaking the empty horn with renewed discontent. From this unsatisfactory examination, however, he was soon called by a loud and piercing exclamation from Uncas, which sounded, even to the unpractised ears of Duncan, as the signal of some new and unexpected calamity. Together they rushed down the pass to the friendly chasm with a rapidity that rendered the scattering fire of their enemies perfectly harmless. The cry had brought the sisters, together with the wounded David, from their place of refuge. The whole party at a single glance saw the disaster that had disturbed even the calm of their youthful Indian protector.

At a short distance from the rock their little canoe was to be seen floating towards the swift current of the river in a manner which proved that its course was directed by some hidden agent. The instant this

unwelcome sight caught the eye of the scout, his rifle was leveled as by instinct, but the barrel gave no answer to the bright sparks of the flint.

“’Tis too late; ’tis too late!” Hawkeye exclaimed, dropping the useless piece in bitter disappointment. “The scoundrel has struck the rapid; and had we powder, it could hardly send the lead swifter than he now goes!”

The adventurous Huron raised his head above the shelter of the canoe. While it glided swiftly down the stream, he waved his hand and gave forth the shout which was the known signal of success. His cry was answered by a yell and a laugh from the woods.

“Well may you laugh, you children of the devil,” said the scout, seating himself on a projection of the rock and allowing his gun to fall neglected at his feet, “for the three quickest and surest rifles in these woods are no better than so many stalks of grain!”

“What is to be done?” demanded Duncan, losing the first feeling of disappointment in a more manly desire for exertion. “What will become of us?”

Hawkeye made no reply other than by passing his finger around the crown of his head in a manner so significant that none who witnessed the action could mistake its meaning.

“Surely, surely, our case is not so desperate!” exclaimed the youth. “The Hurons are not here; we may make good the caverns; we may oppose their landing.”



“With what?” coolly demanded the scout. “The arrows of Uncas, or such tears as women shed? No, no; you are young and rich and have friends, and at such an age I know it is hard to die!”

“Our case cannot be so hopeless!” said Duncan. “Even at this moment aid may be at hand. I see no enemies! They have sickened of a struggle in which they risk so much with so little prospect of gain!”

“It may be a minute or it may be an hour before the wily serpents steal upon us, and it is quite in nature for them to be lying within hearing at this very moment,” said Hawkeye; “but come they will and in such a fashion as will leave us nothing to hope! Chingachgook, my brother, we have fought our last battle together, and the Hurons will triumph in the death of the wise man of the Mohicans.”

“Let the Huron women go weep over their slain!” returned the Indian with characteristic pride and unmoved firmness. “Eleven warriors lie hid from the graves of their tribes since the snows have melted, and none will tell where to find them when the tongue of Chingachgook shall be silent! Let them draw the sharpest knife and whirl the swiftest tomahawk, for their bitterest enemy is in their hands. Uncas, call on the cowards to hasten or their hearts will soften and they will change to women!”

“Why die at all!” said Cora, advancing from the place where natural horror had until this moment held her riveted to the rock. “The path is open on

every side. Fly, then, to the woods, and call on God for aid. Go, brave men; we owe you too much already. Let us no longer involve you in our ill fortunes!"

"You but little know the craft of the Huron, lady, if you judge they have left the path open to the woods!" returned Hawkeye. He immediately added, "The downstream current, it is true, *might* soon sweep us beyond the reach of their rifles or the sounds of their voices."

"Then try the river. Why linger to add to the number of victims of our merciless enemies?"

"Why," repeated the scout, looking about him proudly, "because it is better for a man to die at peace with himself than to live haunted by an evil conscience! What answer could we give your father when he asked us where and how we left his children?"

"Go to him and say that you left them with a message to hasten to their aid," returned Cora, advancing nearer to the scout; "that the Hurons bear them into the northern wilds, but that by vigilance and speed they may yet be rescued. If, after all, his assistance comes too late, bear to him," she continued, "the love, the blessings, the final prayers of his daughters."

The hard, weather-beaten features of the scout began to work, and when she had ended, he dropped his chin to his hand, like a man musing profoundly on the nature of the proposal.

"There is reason in her words!" at length broke from his compressed and trembling lips. "Chingach-









gook! Uncas! Do you hear the talk of the dark-eyed woman!"

He now spoke in Delaware to his companions, and his address, though calm and deliberate, seemed very decided. The elder Mohican heard him with deep gravity and appeared to ponder on his words. After a moment of hesitation, he waved his hand in assent and uttered the English word "good!" Then, replacing his knife and tomahawk in his girdle, the warrior moved silently to the edge of the rock which was most concealed from the banks of the river. Here he paused a moment, pointing significantly to the woods below. Saying a few words in his own language, as if indicating his intended route, he dropped into the water and sank from before the eyes of the witnesses of his movements.

The scout delayed his departure to speak to the generous girl, whose breathing became lighter as she saw the success of her plea.

"Wisdom is sometimes given to the young as well as to the old," he said; "and what you have spoken is wise, not to call it by a better word. If you are led into the woods—that is, such of you as may be spared for a while—break the twigs on the bushes as you pass and make the marks of your trail as broad as you can. If mortal eyes can see them, depend on having a friend who will follow to the ends of the earth before he deserts you."

He gave Cora an affectionate shake of the hand,

lifted his rifle, regarded it a moment with melancholy solicitude, laid it carefully aside, and descended to the place where Chingachgook had just disappeared. For an instant he hung suspended by the rock. Looking about him with a countenance of peculiar care, he added bitterly, "Had the powder held out, this disgrace could never have befallen!" Then the water closed above his head and he also became lost to view.

All eyes were now turned on Uncas, who stood leaning against the ragged rock, in immovable composure. After waiting a short time, Cora pointed down the river and said:—

"Your friends have not been seen and are now, most probably, in safety. Is it not time for you to follow?"

"Uncas will stay," the young Mohican calmly announced in English.

"To increase the horror of our capture and to diminish the chances of our release! Go, generous young man," Cora continued, lowering her eyes under the gaze of the Mohican, and, perhaps, with an intuitive consciousness of her power over him. "Go to my father, as I have said and be the most confidential of my messengers. Tell him to trust you with the means to buy the freedom of his daughters. Go! 'Tis my wish, 'tis my prayer that you will go!"

The settled, calm look of the young chief changed to an expression of gloom, but he no longer hesitated. With a noiseless step he crossed the rock and dropped



into the troubled stream. Hardly a breath was drawn by those he left behind, until they caught a glimpse of his head emerging for air, far down the current, when he again sank and was seen no more.

These sudden and apparently successful experiments had all taken place in a few minutes of that time which had now become so precious. After the last look at Uncas, Cora turned, and with a quivering lip addressed herself to Heyward.

"I have heard of your boasted skill in the water, too, Duncan," she said; "follow, then, the wise example set you by these simple and faithful beings."

"Is such the faith that Cora Munro would exact from her protector?" said the young man, smiling mournfully, but with bitterness.

"This is not a time for idle questions and false opinions," she answered, "but a moment when every duty should be equally considered. To us you can be of no further service here, but your precious life may be saved for other and nearer friends."

"There are evils worse than death," said Duncan, speaking hoarsely.

Cora ceased her entreaties. Veiling her face in her shawl, she drew the nearly insensible Alice after her into the deepest recess of the inner cavern.

## CHAPTER 8

The sudden and almost magical change from the stirring incidents of the combat to the stillness that now reigned around him acted on the heated imagination of Heyward like some exciting dream. Still ignorant of the fate of those who had trusted to the aid of the swift current, he at first listened intently to any signal or sounds of alarm. His attention was, however, bestowed in vain; for, with the disappearance of Uncas, every sign of the adventurers had been lost, leaving Duncan in total uncertainty of their fate.

Every effort to detect the least evidence of the approach of their hidden enemies was fruitless. The wooded banks of the rivers seemed again deserted by everything possessing animal life. Yet Duncan caught from the quiet of the solitary scene a glimmering of hope. He began to rally his faculties to renewed exertions with something like a reviving confidence of success.

“The Hurons are not to be seen,” he said, addressing David, who had by no means recovered from the effects of the stunning blow he had received; “let us conceal ourselves in the cavern, and trust the rest to Providence.”

Leaning on the arm of his companion, David entered the narrow mouth of the cave. Duncan seized a pile of brush which he drew before the passage, studiously concealing every appearance of an opening.

"I like not that principle of the natives which teaches them to submit without a struggle in emergencies that appear desperate," he said. "Our own saying 'while life remains there is hope' is more consoling, and better suited to a soldier's temperament. To you, Cora, I will urge no words of idle encouragement; your own bravery will teach you all that may become your sex; but cannot we dry the tears of your trembling sister?"

"I am calmer, Duncan," said Alice, raising herself from the arms of her sister and forcing an appearance of calm through her tears; "much calmer, now. Surely, in this hidden spot we are safe, we are secret, free from injury. We will hope everything from those generous men who have risked so much already in our behalf."

"Now our gentle Alice speaks like a daughter of Munro!" said Heyward, pausing to press her hand as he passed towards the outer entrance of the cavern. "With two such examples of courage before him, a man would be ashamed to prove other than a hero." He then seated himself in the center of the cavern, grasping his remaining pistol with a hand convulsively clenched, while his frowning eye announced the sullen desperation of his purpose. "The Hurons, if they come, may not gain our position so easily as they



think," he softly muttered. Dropping his head back against the rock, he seemed to await the result in patience, though his gaze was unceasingly bent on the open avenue to their place of retreat.

With the last sound of his voice, a deep, a long, and almost breathless silence succeeded. The fresh air of the morning had penetrated the cave and its influence was gradually felt on the spirits of its inmates. As minute after minute passed by, leaving them in undisturbed security, the feeling of hope gradually gained possession of every bosom, though each one felt reluctant to give utterance to expectations that the next moment might so fearfully destroy.

David alone formed an exception to these varying emotions. A gleam of light from the opening crossed his wan countenance and fell upon the pages of the little volume, whose leaves he was again occupied in turning, as if searching for some fitting song. He was, most probably, acting all this time under a confused recollection of the promised consolation of Duncan. At length, he pronounced aloud the title of a song and began to sing.

"May not this prove dangerous?" asked Cora, glancing her dark eye at Major Heyward.

"Poor fellow! His voice is too feeble to be heard amid the din of the falls," was the answer. "Besides, the cavern will prove his friend. Let him indulge his passion, since it may be done without danger."

Exerting his powers to their utmost, David was

filling the arches of the cave with long and full tones, when a yell burst into the air which instantly stilled his strains, choking his voice suddenly, as though his heart had literally bounded into the passage of his throat.

“We are lost!” exclaimed Alice, throwing herself into the arms of Cora.

“Not yet, not yet,” returned the agitated but undaunted Heyward; “the sound came from the center of the island, and it has been produced by the sight of their dead companions. We are not yet discovered, and there is still hope.”

A second yell soon followed the first, when a rush of voices was heard pouring down the island from its upper to its lower extremity until the savages reached the naked rock above the caverns. After a shout of savage triumph the air continued full of horrible cries and screams, such as man alone can utter when in a state of the fiercest barbarity.

The sounds quickly spread around them in every direction. Some called to their fellows from the water’s edge, and were answered from the heights above. Cries were heard in the startling vicinity of the chasm between the two caves, which mingled with hoarser yells that arose out of the abyss of the deep ravine. In short, so rapidly had the savage sounds diffused themselves over the barren rock that it was not difficult for the anxious listeners to imagine they could be heard beneath them.

In the midst of this tumult a triumphant yell was raised within a few yards of the hidden entrance to the cave. Heyward abandoned every hope, with the belief it was the signal that they were discovered. Again the impression passed away, as he heard the voices collect near the spot where the white man had so reluctantly abandoned his rifle. Amid the jargon of the Indian dialects that he now plainly heard, it was easy to distinguish not only words but sentences. A burst of voices had shouted simultaneously, "La Longue Carabine!" causing the opposite woods to re-echo. Heyward remembered that this name—French for "The Long Rifle"—had been given by his enemies to a celebrated hunter and scout of the English camp. He now realized for the first time that this famous man was his recent companion, Hawkeye.

"La Longue Carabine! La Longue Carbine!" passed from mouth to mouth, until the whole band appeared to be collected around a prize which seemed to announce the death of its formidable owner. After a noisy consultation, which was at times deafened by bursts of savage joy, the Hurons again separated, searching for a body they hoped to find concealed in some crevice of the island.

"Now," he whispered to the trembling sisters, "now is the moment of uncertainty! If our place of retreat escapes this security, we are still safe! In every event, we are assured, by what has fallen from our enemies,



that our friends have escaped, and in two short hours we may look for succor from General Webb."

There were now a few minutes of fearful stillness, during which Heyward well knew that the savages conducted their search with greater vigilance and method. More than once he could distinguish their footsteps nearby. At length, the pile of brush yielded a little, a corner of the blanket fell, and a faint ray of light gleamed into the inner part of the cave.

Cora folded Alice to her bosom in agony, and Duncan sprang to his feet. A shout was at that moment heard, as if issuing from the center of the rock, announcing that the neighboring cavern had at length been entered. In a minute, the number and loudness of the voices indicated that the whole party was collected in and around that secret place.

As the inner passages to the two caves were so close to each other, Duncan, believing that escape was no longer possible, passed David and the sisters, to place himself between the latter and the first rush of the terrible meeting. Grown desperate at his situation, he drew near the slight barrier which separated him only by a few feet from his relentless pursuers. Placing his face to the opening, he even looked out, with a sort of desperate indifference, on their movements.

Within reach of his arm was the brawny shoulder of a gigantic Indian, whose deep and authoritative

voice appeared to give directions to the proceedings of his fellows. Beyond him again, Duncan could look into the cave opposite, which was filled with savages, upturning and rifling the humble equipment of the scout. David's wound had dyed the leaves of the brush. Over this sign of their success, they set up a howl like an opening from so many hounds who had recovered a lost trail.

After this yell of victory they tore up the fragrant bed of the cavern and bore the branches into the chasm, scattering the boughs as if they suspected them of concealing the person of the man they had so long hated and feared. One fierce and wild-looking warrior approached the chief bearing a load of brush. Pointing exultingly to the deep red stains with which it was sprinkled, he uttered his joy in Indian yells, whose meaning Heyward was only enabled to comprehend by the frequent repetition of the name of "La Longue Carabine!"

When his triumph had ceased, he cast the brush on the slight heap that Duncan had made before the entrance of the second cave and closed the view. His example was followed by others, who, as they drew the branches from the cave of the scout, threw them into one pile, adding unconsciously to the security of those they sought. The very slightness of the defense was its chief merit, for no one thought of disturbing a mass of brush, which all of them believed. in that

moment of hurry and confusion, had been accidentally raised by the hands of their own party.

As the branches settled in the fissure of the rock by their own weight, forming a compact body, Duncan once more breathed freely. With a light step and lighter heart he returned to the center of the cave and took the place he had left, where he could command a view of the opening next the river. While he was in the act of making this movement, the Indians, as if changing their purpose by a common impulse, broke away from the chasm in a body and were heard rushing up the island again towards the point from which they had originally descended. Here another wailing cry betrayed that they were again collected around the bodies of their dead comrades.

Duncan now ventured to look at his companions; for, during the most critical moments of their danger, he had been fearful that the anxiety of his countenance might communicate some additional alarm to the girls.

"They are gone, Cora!" he whispered. "Alice, they have gone and we are saved! To Heaven, that has alone delivered us from the grasp of so merciless an enemy, be all the praise!"

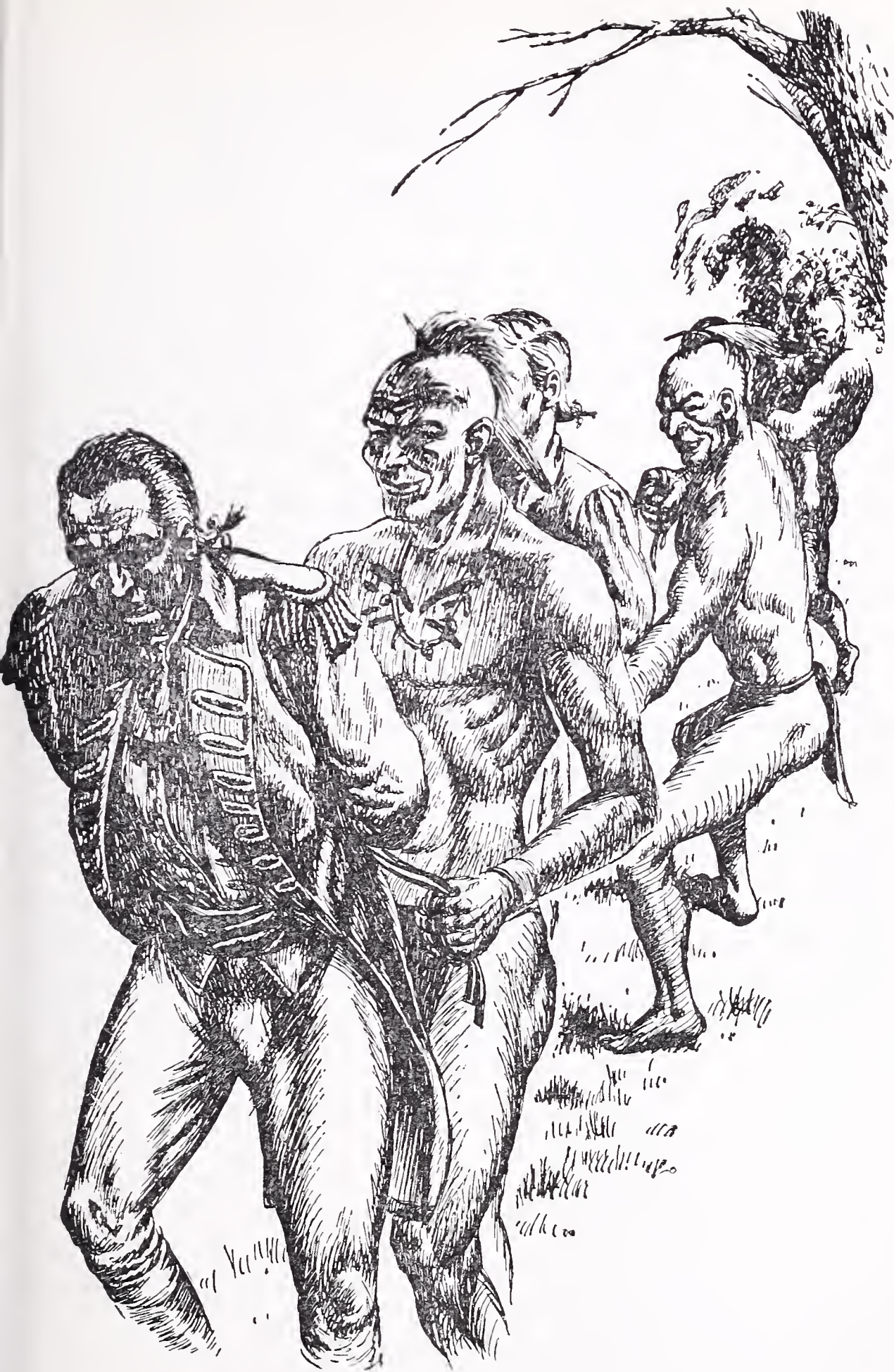
"Then to Heaven will I return my thanks!" exclaimed the younger sister, rising from the encircling arms of Cora and casting herself with enthusiastic gratitude on the naked rock.



Both Heyward and Cora witnessed the act of involuntary emotion with powerful sympathy. Alice's eyes were radiant with the glow of grateful feelings; the flush of her beauty was again seated on her cheeks, and her whole soul seemed ready and anxious to pour out its thanksgivings. But when her lips moved, the words they should have uttered appeared frozen by some new and sudden chill. Her bloom gave place to the paleness of death; her soft and melting eyes grew hard, and seemed contracting with horror. Her hands which she had raised, clasped in each other, towards heaven, dropped in horizontal lines before her, the fingers pointed forward in convulsed motion. Heyward turned, the instant she gave a direction to his suspicions. Peering just above the ledge which formed the threshold of the open outlet of the cavern, he beheld the malignant, fierce, and savage features of Magua, *Le Renard Subtil*.

In that moment of surprise the self-possession of Heyward did not desert him. He observed by the vacant expression of the Indian's countenance, that his eye, accustomed to the open air, had not yet been able to penetrate the dusky light inside the cavern. He had even thought of retreating beyond a curvature in the natural wall when, by the sudden gleam of intelligence that shot across the features of the savage, he saw it was too late. They were betrayed.

The look of exultation and brutal triumph which announced this terrible truth was irritating. Forget-







ful of everything but the impulses of his hot blood, Duncan leveled his pistol and fired. The report of the weapon made the cavern bellow like an eruption from a volcano. When the smoke had been driven away, the place so lately occupied by the features of his treacherous guide was vacant. Rushing to the outlet, Heyward caught a glimpse of his dark figure, stealing around a low and narrow ledge, which soon hid him entirely from sight.

Among the savages a frightful stillness succeeded the explosion, which had just been heard bursting from the rock. But when Le Renard raised his voice in a long and intelligible whoop, it was answered by a spontaneous yell from the mouth of every Indian within hearing of the sound. The clamorous noises again rushed down the island. Before Duncan had time to recover from the shock, his feeble barrier of brush was scattered to the winds; the cavern was entered at both its extremities, and he and his companions were dragged from their shelter and borne into the day, where they stood surrounded by the whole band of the triumphant Hurons.

## CHAPTER 9

The instant the shock of this sudden misfortune had lessened, Duncan began to observe the appearance and proceedings of their captors. Contrary to usual custom the natives had respected not only the persons of the trembling sisters, but his own. Heyward was convinced that they were to be reserved for some object of particular importance.

The more experienced warriors continued their search throughout both caverns, with an activity that denoted they were far from being satisfied with those fruits of their conquest which had already been brought to light. Unable to discover any new victim, these diligent workers of vengeance soon approached their male prisoners, pronouncing Hawkeye's name, "La Longue Carabine," with a fierceness that could not easily be mistaken. Afraid of irritating his captors by too stubborn a silence, Heyward looked about him in quest of Magua, who might interpret his answers to questions which were at each moment becoming more earnest and threatening.

The conduct of this savage had formed a solitary exception to that of all his fellows. While the others were busily occupied in seeking to gratify their child-

ish passion for finery by plundering even the miserable possessions of the scout, Le Renard had stood at a little distance from the prisoners, with a quiet and satisfied look. When the eyes of Heyward first met those of his recent guide, he turned them away in horror at the sinister though calm look he encountered. Conquering his disgust, however, he addressed his successful enemy.

“You are too much of a warrior,” said the reluctant Heyward, “to refuse to tell me, an unarmed man, what my conquerors say.”

“They ask for the hunter who knows the paths through the woods,” returned Magua, in his broken English. “La Longue Carabine! His rifle is good, and his eye never shut; but, like the short gun of the white chief, it is nothing against the life of me, Le Renard Subtil.”

The cry of “La Longue Carabine” was renewed by the impatient savages.

“You hear,” said Magua with stubborn indifference; “the red Hurons call for the life of ‘The Long Rifle,’ or they will have the blood of them that keep him hid!”

“He is gone—escaped; he is far beyond their reach.”

Renard smiled with cold contempt, as he answered,—

“When the white man dies, he thinks he is at peace; but the redmen know how to torture even the ghosts



of their enemies. Where is his body? Let the Hurons see his scalp!"

"He is not dead, but escaped."

Magua shook his head incredulously.

"Is he a bird, to spread his wings; or is he a fish, to swim without air! The white chief reads in his books, and he believes the Hurons are fools!"

"Though no fish, 'The Long Rifle' can swim. He floated down the stream when the powder was all burnt, and when the eyes of the Hurons were behind a cloud."

"Can the Delawares swim, too, as well as crawl in the bushes? Where is Chingachgook, Le Gros Serpent?"

Duncan, who perceived by the use of these Canadian names that his late companions were much better known to his enemies than to himself, answered reluctantly, "He also is gone down with the water."

"Le Cerf Agile is not here?"

"I know not whom you call 'The Bounding Elk,'" said Duncan, gladly profiting by any excuse to create delay.

"Uncas," returned Magua. "Has he leaped the river to the woods?"

"If you mean the younger Delaware, he too is gone down with the water."

As there was nothing improbable to an Indian in the manner of the escape, Magua admitted the truth of what he had heard.

The Hurons had awaited the result of this short dialogue with characteristic patience and with a silence that increased until there was a general stillness in the band. When Heyward ceased to speak, they turned their eyes as one man on Magua, demanding in this expressive manner an explanation of what had been said. Their interpreter pointed to the river and made them acquainted with the result, as much by the action as by the few words he uttered. The savages raised a frightful yell, which declared the extent of their disappointment. Some ran furiously to the water's edge, beating the air with frantic gestures, while others threw menacing looks at those captives who still remained in their power. The young soldier made a desperate but fruitless effort to spring to the side of Alice, when he saw the dark hand of a savage twisted in her rich tresses while a knife was passed threateningly around her head. But his hands were bound. Immediately realizing how unavailing any struggle against such an overwhelming force must prove, he submitted to his fate, encouraging his gentle companions by a few low and tender assurances.

But while Duncan resorted to these words of consolation to quiet the fears of the sisters, he was not so weak as to deceive himself. He well knew that their lives hung by a thread. Soon the Indians made signs to the prisoners to descend and enter the canoe.

As resistance was impossible and objection useless, Heyward set the example of submission by leading

the way into the canoe, where he was soon seated with the sisters and the still wondering David.

When they touched shore, the band divided. Most of the Indians disappeared in the woods, leaving the prisoners in charge of six savages, at whose head was Le Renard Subtil. Duncan witnessed all their movements with renewed uneasiness.

He had hoped, from the uncommon mildness of the savages, that he was reserved as a prisoner for the French general Montcalm.

All those busy speculations were now annihilated by the conduct of his captors. That portion of the band who had followed a huge warrior took the route towards the foot of the Horican, and no other expectation could be realized but that they were to be retained as hopeless captives by their savage conquerors. Anxious to know the worst, and willing in such an emergency to try the power of gold, he overcame his reluctance to speak to Magua, but the Indian remained cool.

Magua made the signal to proceed, advancing in front to lead the party in person. Next followed David, who was gradually coming to a true sense of his condition, as the effects of the wound became less and less apparent. The sisters rode in his rear, with Heyward at their side, while the Indians flanked the party and brought up the close of the march with a caution that seemed never to tire.

In this manner they proceeded in uninterrupted



silence, except when Heyward addressed some solitary word of comfort to the girls. Cora alone remembered the parting suggestion of the scout. Whenever an opportunity offered, she stretched forth her arm to bend aside the twigs that met her hands. But the vigilance of the Indians rendered this act of precaution both difficult and dangerous. She was often defeated in her purpose by encountering their watchful eyes, when it became necessary to feign an alarm she did not feel. Once, and only once, was she completely successful, when she broke down the bough of a large sumach, and by a sudden thought let her glove fall at the same instant. This sign, intended for those that might follow, was observed by one of her conductors, who restored the glove and broke the remaining branches of the bush in such a manner that it appeared to proceed from the struggling of some beast in its branches. He laid his hand on his tomahawk with a look so significant that it put an effective end to her efforts.

After a long journey they paused to rest.

## CHAPTER 10

The Indian had selected for this desirable purpose a hill high and precipitous, its top flattened. It possessed no other apparent advantage for a resting-place than in its elevation and form, which might render defense easy and surprise nearly impossible. As Heyward, however, no longer expected rescue, he regarded these little peculiarities with an eye devoid of interest.

Notwithstanding the swiftness of their flight, one of the Indians had found an opportunity to strike a straggling fawn with an arrow, and had borne the more preferable fragments of the victim patiently on his shoulders to the stopping-place. Without any aid from the science of cookery he was immediately employed, in common with his fellows, in gorging himself with this digestible food. Magua alone sat apart, without participation in the revolting meal, and apparently buried in the deepest thought.

This action, so remarkable in an Indian when he possessed the means of satisfying hunger, at length attracted the notice of Heyward, who approached Le Renard and engaged him in conversation. He tried once again to overcome Magua's hatred of the girls'

father, Munro, who had once punished the Indian. At last Magua said, "Go to the dark-haired daughter and say, 'Magua waits to speak.'"

Duncan slowly and reluctantly went to the place where the sisters were now resting from their fatigue to communicate the message to Cora.

"You understand the nature of an Indian's wishes," he concluded as he led her towards the place where she was expected, "and must be generous of your offers of powder and blankets. Remember, Cora, that on your presence of mind and ingenuity even your life, as well as that of Alice, may in some measure depend."

"Heyward, and yours!"

"Mine is of little moment; it is already sold to my king, and is a prize to be seized by any enemy who may possess the power. I have no father to expect me, and but few friends to lament my fate. But hush! We approach the Indian. Magua, the lady with whom you wish to speak is here."

The Indian rose slowly from his seat, and stood for nearly a minute silent and motionless. He then signed with his hand for Heyward to retire, saying coldly, "When the Huron talks to the women, his tribe shut their ears."

Since Duncan still lingered, as if refusing to comply, Cora said with a calm smile, "You hear, Heyward. Go to Alice, and comfort her with our reviving prospects."



She waited until he had departed, and then turning to the native, with the dignity of her sex in her voice and manner, she added, "What would Le Renard say to the daughter of Munro?"

"Listen," said the Indian, laying his hand firmly upon her arm, as if to draw her utmost attention to his words; a movement that Cora as firmly but quietly repulsed; "Magua was born a chief and a warrior among the red Hurons of the lakes; he saw the suns of twenty summers make the snows of twenty winters run off in the streams before he saw a pale-face; and he was happy! Then the white man came into the woods and taught him to drink fire-water, and he became a rascal."

"Something like this I have heard before," said Cora, observing that he paused to suppress those passions which began to burn with too bright a flame, as he recalled his supposed injuries.

"Was it the fault of Le Renard that his head was not made of rock? Who gave him the fire-water? Who made him a villain? 'Twas the pale-faces, the people of your own color."

"And am I to blame that thoughtless and unprincipled men exist, whose shades of countenance may resemble mine?" Cora calmly demanded of the excited savage.

"No; Magua is a man, and not a fool; the Great Spirit has given you wisdom!"

"What then have I to do or say in the matter of your misfortunes, not to say of your errors?"

“Listen,” repeated the Indian, resuming his earnest attitude; “the pale-faces have driven the redskins from their hunting-grounds, and now when they fight, a white man leads the way. The old chief at Horican, your father, was the great captain of our war-party. He made a law that if an Indian swallowed the fire-water and came into the wigwams of his warriors, it should not be forgotten. Magua foolishly opened his mouth, and the hot liquor led him into the cabin of Munro. What did the gray-head do? Let his daughter say.”

“He forgot not his words and did justice by punishing the offender,” said the undaunted daughter.

“Justice!” repeated the Indian, casting a side glance of the most ferocious expression at her unyielding countenance; “is it justice to make evil, and then punish for it? Magua was not himself; it was the fire-water that spoke and acted for him! But Munro did not believe it. I was tied up before all the pale-faced warriors and whipped like a dog.”

Cora remained silent, for she knew not how to explain this severity on the part of her father, in a manner to suit the comprehension of an Indian.

“See!” continued Magua, tearing aside the slight calico that very imperfectly concealed his painted breast; “here are scars given by knives and bullets—of these a warrior may boast before his nation. But the gray-head has left marks on the back of the Huron chief which he must hide like a squaw, under this painted cloth of the whites.”

“I had thought,” resumed Cora, “that an Indian warrior was patient, and that his spirit felt not and knew not the pain his body suffered.”

“When the Chippewas tied Magua to the stake, and cut this gash,” said the other, laying his finger on a deep scar, “I laughed in their faces. But when I felt the blows of Munro, my spirit lay under the birch. The spirit of a Huron is never drunk; it remembers forever!”

“But it may be appeased. If my father has done you this injustice, show him how an Indian can forgive an injury, and take back his daughters. You have heard from Major Heyward—”

Magua shook his head, forbidding the repetition of offers he so much despised.

“What would you have?” continued Cora, after a most painful pause.

“What a Huron loves—good for good; bad for bad!”

“You would then revenge the injury inflicted by Munro on his helpless daughters. Would it not be more like a man to go before his face and take the satisfaction of a warrior?”

“The arms of the pale-faces are long and their knives sharp!” returned the savage, with an evil laugh. “Why should Le Renard go among the muskets of his warriors, when he holds the spirit of the gray-head in his hand?”

“Name your intention, Magua,” said Cora, strug-



gling with herself to speak with steady calmness. "Is it to lead us prisoners to the woods, or do you contemplate even some greater evil? Is there no reward, no means of softening your heart? At least, release my gentle sister and pour out all your malice on me. Purchase wealth by her safety and satisfy your revenge with a single victim. The loss of both of his daughters might bring the aged man to his grave, and where would then be the satisfaction of Le Renard?"

"Listen," said the Indian again. "Your sister can go back to the Horican, and tell the old chief what has been done, if you will swear by the Great Spirit of your fathers to tell no lie."

"What must I promise?" demanded Cora, still maintaining a secret mastery over the fierce native, by the feminine dignity of her presence.

"When Magua left his people, his wife was given to another chief. He has now made friends with the Hurons and will go back to the graves of his tribe on the shores of the great lake. Let the daughter of the English chief follow and live in his wigwam forever."

However revolting a proposal of such a character might prove to Cora, she retained, notwithstanding her powerful disgust, sufficient self-command to reply without betraying the weakness.

"And what pleasure would Magua find in sharing his cabin with a wife he did not love, one who would be of a nation and color different from his own? It

would be better to take the gold of Munro and buy the heart of some Huron maid with his gifts.”

The Indian made no reply for nearly a minute, but bent his fierce looks on the countenance of Cora.

“When the blows scorched the back of Le Renard, he would know where to find a woman to feel the smart. The daughter of Munro would draw his water, hoe his corn, and cook his venison. The body of the gray-head would sleep among his cannon, but his heart would lie within reach of the knife of Le Renard.”

“Monster! Well do you deserve your treacherous name!” cried Cora. “None but a fiend could meditate such a vengeance!”

The Indian answered this bold defiance by a ghastly smile that showed an unaltered purpose, while he motioned her away as if to close the conference forever. Cora, already regretting her haste, was obliged to comply, for Magua instantly left the spot. Heyward flew to the side of the agitated girl and demanded the result of a dialogue that he had watched at a distance with so much interest. But unwilling to alarm the fears of Alice, she evaded a direct reply, betraying only by her countenance her utter want of success and keeping her anxious looks fastened on the slightest movements of their captors. To the earnest questions of her sister, she made no other answer than by pointing towards the dark group and murmuring, as she folded Alice to her bosom—

“There, there; read our fortunes in their faces; we shall see; we shall see!”

The action and the choked utterance of Cora spoke more impressively than any words, and quickly drew the attention of her companions to that spot where her own was riveted.

When Magua reached the cluster of lolling savages, he commenced speaking with the dignity of an Indian chief. The first syllables he uttered caused his listeners to raise themselves in attitudes of respectful attention. At first the language, as well as the action of Magua, appeared calm and deliberative, but at last he aroused them to fighting pitch by retelling their recent bloody experiences.

He spoke of the wives and children of the slain, their destitution, their misery, their distance, and at last of their unavenged wrongs. Then suddenly lifting his voice to a pitch of terrific energy, he concluded by demanding, “Are the Hurons dogs to bear this? Who shall say to the wives of the slain that the fishes have their scalps and that we have not taken revenge! What shall be said to the old men when they ask us for scalps, and we have not a hair from a white head to give them! The women will point their fingers at us. There is a dark spot on the names of the Hurons, and it must be hid in blood!”

His voice was no longer audible in the burst of rage which now broke into the air, as if the wood, instead of containing so small a band, was filled with



the nation. The whole band sprang upon their feet as one man. Giving utterance to their rage in the most frantic cries, they rushed upon their prisoners in a body with drawn knives and uplifted tomahawks. Heyward threw himself between the sisters and the foremost, whom he grappled with a desperate strength that for a moment checked his violence. This unexpected resistance gave Magua time to interpose; with rapid enunciation and animated gesture he drew the attention of the band again to himself. In that language he knew so well how to assume, he diverted his comrades from their instant purpose, and invited them to prolong the misery of their victims. His proposal was received with acclamations and executed with the swiftness of thought.

Two powerful warriors cast themselves on Heyward, while another was occupied in securing the less active singing-master. Neither of the captives, however, submitted without a desperate though fruitless struggle. Even David hurled his assailant to the earth; nor was Heyward secured until the victory over his companion enabled the Indians to direct their united force to that object. He was then bound and fastened to the body of a sapling.

When the young soldier regained consciousness, he had the painful certainty before his eyes that a common fate was intended for the whole party. On his right was Cora, in a plight similar to his own, pale

and agitated, but with an eye whose steady look still read the proceedings of their enemies. On his left Alice was similarly tied. Her hands were clasped before her in prayer, but instead of looking upwards her unconscious looks wandered to the countenance of Duncan with infantile dependency.

The vengeance of the Hurons had now taken a new direction, and they prepared to execute it with that barbarous ingenuity with which they were familiar. Some sought knots to raise the blazing pile. One was cutting the splinters of pine to pierce the flesh of their captives with the burning fragments. Others bent the tops of two saplings to the earth, in order to suspend Heyward by the arms between the recoiling branches. But the vengeance of Magua sought a deeper and a more malignant enjoyment.

While the monsters prepared, before the eyes of those who were to suffer, these well-known means of torture, he approached Cora, and pointed out with the most malign expression of countenance, the speedy fate that awaited her.

“Ha!” he added. “What says the daughter of Munro? Her head is too good to find a pillow in the wigwam of Le Renard. Will she like it better when it rolls about this hill, a plaything for the wolves?”

“What means the monster?” demanded the astonished Heyward.

“Nothing!” was the firm reply. “He is a savage,

a barbarous and ignorant savage, and knows not what he does. Let us find leisure with our dying breath to ask for him penitence and pardon."

"Pardon!" echoed the fierce Huron, mistaking in his anger the meaning of her words. "The memory of an Indian is longer than the arm of the pale-faces; his mercy shorter than their justice! Say; shall I send your sister to your father, and will you follow Magua to the great lakes to carry his water and feed him with corn?"

Cora beckoned him away with an emotion of disgust she could not control.

"Leave me," she said, with a solemnity that for a moment checked the barbarity of the Indian; "you mingle bitterness in my prayers; you stand between me and my God!"

The slight impression produced on the savage was, however, soon forgotten, and he continued pointing, with taunting irony, towards Alice.

"Look! The child weeps! She is young to die! Send her to Munro to comb his gray hairs and keep life in the heart of the old man."

Cora could not resist the desire to look upon her youthful sister, in whose eyes she met an imploring glance.

"What says he, dearest Cora?" asked the trembling voice of Alice. "Did he speak of sending me to our father?"



For many moments the elder sister looked upon the younger, with a countenance that wavered with powerful and contending emotions. At length she spoke, though her tones had lost their rich and calm fullness, in an expression of tenderness that seemed maternal.

“Alice,” she said, “the Huron offers us both life, nay, more than both. He offers to restore Duncan, our invaluable Duncan, as well as you, to our friends—to our father—to our heart-stricken, childless father, if I will bow down this rebellious, stubborn pride of mine, and consent—”

Her voice became choked, and clasping her hands, she looked upward.

“Say on,” cried Alice; “to what, dearest Cora? O, that the proffer were made to me! To save you, to cheer our aged father, to restore Duncan, how cheerfully could I die!”

“Die!” repeated Cora, with a calmer and a firmer voice. “That would be easy! Perhaps the alternative may not be less so. He would have me,” she continued, her accents sinking under a deep consciousness of the degradation of the proposal, “follow him to the wilderness; go to the habitations of the Hurons; to remain there—in short, to become his wife! Speak, then, Alice and you, too, Major Heyward; aid my weak reason with your counsel. Is life to be purchased by such a sacrifice? Will you, Alice, receive

it at my hands at such a price? And *you*, Duncan, guide me; control me between you, for I am wholly yours."

"Would I!" echoed the indignant and astonished youth. "Cora! Cora! You jest with our misery! Do not name the horrid alternative again. The thought itself is worse than a thousand deaths."

"That such would be *your* answer, I well knew!" exclaimed Cora, her cheeks flushing and her dark eyes once more sparkling with the lingering emotions of a woman. "What says my Alice? For her will I submit without another murmur."

Although both Heyward and Cora listened with painful suspense and the deepest attention, no sounds were heard in reply. It appeared as if the delicate and sensitive form of Alice would shrink into itself, as she listened to this proposal. In a few moments, however, her head began to move slowly, in a sign of deep, unconquerable disapproval.

"No, no, no; better that we die as we have lived, together!"

"Then die!" shouted Magua, hurling his tomahawk with violence at the unresisting speaker, and gnashing his teeth with rage at this sudden exhibition of firmness in the one he believed the weakest of the party. The axe cleaved the air in front of Heyward, and cutting some of the flowing ringlets of Alice, quivered in the tree above her head. The sight maddened Duncan to desperation. Collecting all his ener-









gies in one effort, he snapped the twigs which bound him and rushed upon another savage, who was preparing with loud yells, and a more deliberate aim, to repeat the blow. They encountered, grappled, and fell to the earth together.

The naked body of his antagonist afforded Heyward no means of holding his adversary, who glided from his grasp, and rose again with one knee on his chest, pressing him down with the weight of a giant. Duncan already saw the knife gleaming in the air, when a whistling sound swept past him, and was accompanied by the sharp crack of a rifle. He felt his breast relieved from the load it had endured. He saw the savage expression of his adversary's countenance change to a look of vacant wildness, when the Indian fell dead on the faded leaves by his side.

## CHAPTER 11

The Hurons stood aghast at this sudden visitation of death on one of their band. But as they regarded the fatal accuracy of an aim which had dared to kill an enemy at so much danger to a friend, the name of "La Longue Carabine" burst simultaneously from every lip and was succeeded by a wild and plaintive howl. The cry was answered by a loud shout from a little thicket, where the incautious party had piled their arms. At the next moment, Hawkeye, too eager to load the rifle he had regained, was seen advancing upon them, brandishing the clubbed weapon, and cutting the air with wide and powerful sweeps.

Bold and rapid as was the progress of the scout, it was exceeded by that of a light and vigorous form which, bounding past him, leaped with incredible activity and daring into the very center of the Hurons, where it stood, whirling a tomahawk, and flourishing a glittering knife in front of Cora. Quicker than the thoughts could follow these unexpected and audacious movements, another image glided before their eyes, and assumed a threatening attitude at the other's side. The savage tormentors drew back before these warlike intruders, and uttered as they appeared



in such quick succession the often repeated and peculiar exclamation of surprise, followed by the well known and dreaded names of "Le Cerf Agile! Le Gros Serpent!" It was indeed Uncas and Chingachgook.

But the wary and vigilant leader of the Hurons was not so easily disconcerted. Casting his keen eyes around the little plain, he comprehended the nature of the assault at a glance. Encouraging his followers by his voice as well as by his example, he unsheathed his long and dangerous knife and rushed with a loud whoop upon the expectant Chingachgook. It was the signal for a general combat. Neither party had firearms, and the contest was to be decided in the deadliest manner; hand to hand, with weapons of offense, and none of defense.

Uncas answered the whoop and, leaping on an enemy, with a single, well directed blow of his tomahawk, cleft him to the brain. Heyward tore the weapon of Magua from the sapling and rushed eagerly towards the struggle. As the combatants were now equal in number, each singled an opponent from the other band. The rush and blows passed with the fury of a whirlwind and the swiftness of lightning. Hawkeye soon got another enemy within reach of his arm and with one sweep of his formidable weapon he beat down the slight defenses of his antagonist, crushing him to the earth with the blow.

Heyward ventured to hurl the tomahawk he had seized, too ardent to await the moment of closing.

It struck the Indian he had selected on the forehead and checked for an instant his onward rush. Encouraged by this slight advantage, the impetuous young man continued his onset, and sprang upon his enemy with naked hands. A single instant was enough to assure him of the rashness of the measure, for he immediately found himself fully engaged, with all his activity and courage, in endeavoring to ward the desperate thrusts made with the knife of the Huron.

Unable longer to foil an enemy so alert and vigilant, he threw his arms about him and succeeded in pinning the limbs of the other to his side with an iron grasp, but one that was far too exhausting to himself to continue long. In this extremity he heard a voice near him, shouting, "Exterminate the scoundrels! No quarter to an accursed Huron!"

At the next moment the breech of Hawkeye's rifle fell on the naked head of his adversary, whose muscles appeared to wither under the shock, as he sank from the arms of Duncan, flexible and motionless.

When Uncas had brained his first antagonist, he turned like a hungry lion to seek another. The fifth and only Huron not engaged at the first onset had paused a moment. Then seeing that all around him were employed in the deadly strife, he sought with hellish vengeance to complete the baffled work of revenge. Raising a shout of triumph, he sprang to-

wards the defenseless Cora, sending his keen axe as the dreadful messenger of his approach.

The tomahawk grazed her shoulder and, cutting the bonds which bound her to the tree, left the maiden at liberty to fly. She eluded the grasp of the savage and, reckless of her own safety, threw herself before Alice, striving with convulsed and ill-directed fingers to tear asunder the twigs which confined her sister. Any other than a monster would have relented at such an act of generous devotion, but the breast of the Huron was a stranger to sympathy.

Seizing Cora by her rich tresses, he tore her from her frantic hold and bowed her down with brutal violence to her knees. The savage drew the flowing curls through his hand, and raising them on high with an outstretched arm, he passed the knife around the exquisitely moulded head of his victim with a taunting and exulting laugh. But he purchased this moment of fierce gratification with the loss of the fatal opportunity.

It was just then the sight caught the eye of Uncas. Bounding from his footsteps he appeared for an instant darting through the air. Descending in a ball he fell on the chest of his enemy, driving him many yards from the spot, headlong and prostrate. The violence of the exertion cast the young Mohican at his side. They arose together, fought, and bled, each in his turn. But the conflict was soon decided; the



tomahawk of Heyward and the rifle of Hawkeye descended on the skull of the Huron at the same moment that the knife of Uncas reached his heart.

The battle was now entirely ended, with the exception of the protracted struggle between Le Renard Subtil and Le Gros Serpent. Well did these barbarous warriors prove that they deserved those significant names which had been bestowed for deeds in former wars. When they engaged, some little time was lost in eluding the quick and vigorous thrusts which had been aimed at their lives. Suddenly darting on each other, they closed and came to earth, twisted together like twining serpents.

At the moment when the victors found themselves unoccupied, the spot where these experienced and desperate combatants lay could only be distinguished by a cloud of dust and leaves which moved from the center of the little plain towards its boundary, as if raised by the passage of a whirlwind.

Urged by the different motives of filial affection, friendship, and gratitude, Heyward and his companions rushed with one accord to the place, encircling the little canopy of dust which hung about the warriors. In vain did Uncas dart around the cloud, with a wish to strike his knife into the heart of his father's foe. The threatening rifle of Hawkeye was raised and suspended in vain, while Duncan endeavored to seize the limbs of the Huron with hands that appeared to have lost their power. The combatants were covered

with dust and blood. The swift twistings seemed to incorporate their bodies into one.

In this manner the scene of the combat was removed from the center of the little plain to its edge. The Mohican now found an opportunity to make a powerful thrust with his knife. Magua suddenly relinquished his grasp and fell backward without motion, and seemingly without life. His adversary leaped on his feet, making the arches of the forest ring with the sounds of triumph.

“Well done for the Delawares! Victory to the Mohican!” cried Hawkeye, once more elevating the butt of the long and fatal rifle.

But at the very moment when the dangerous weapon was in the act of descending, the subtle Huron rolled swiftly from beneath the danger, over the edge of the precipice. Falling on his feet, he was seen leaping with a single bound into the center of a thicket of low bushes which clung along its sides. The Delawares, who had believed their enemy dead, uttered their exclamation of surprise and followed with speed and clamor, like hounds in open view of the deer. Then a shrill and peculiar cry from the scout instantly changed their purpose and recalled them to the summit of the hill.

“’Twas like himself,” cried the forester, whose prejudices contributed so largely to veil his natural sense of justice in all matters which concerned the Hurons; “a lying and deceitful wretch as he is. An

honest fellow now, being fairly vanquished, would have lain still and been knocked on the head, but this knavish Huron clings to life like a cat-o'-the-mountain. Let him go—let him go. 'Tis but one man, and he without rifle or bow, many a long mile from his French comrades. Like a rattler that has lost his fangs, he can do no further mischief now. Uncas," he added, in Delaware, "it may be well to go round and feel the vagabounds that are left, or we may have another of them loping through the woods, and screeching like a jay that has been winged."

So saying, he made the circuit of the dead, into whose senseless bosoms he thrust his long knife with as much coolness as though they had been so many brute carcasses. He had, however, been anticipated by the elder Mohican, who had already torn the emblems of victory from the unresisting heads of the slain.

But Uncas, denying his habits, flew with instinctive delicacy to the assistance of the girls. Quickly releasing Alice, he placed her in the arms of Cora. Their thanksgivings were deep and silent.

Hawkeye, whose vigilant distrust had satisfied itself that the Hurons no longer possessed the power to interrupt, approached David and liberated him from the bonds he had endured with the most exemplary patience.

"How is it that we see you so soon, my generous



friend," Duncan asked Hawkeye "and without aid from the garrison of Edward?"

"Had we gone to the bend in the river, we might have been in time to rake the leaves over your bodies, but too late to have saved your scalps," coolly answered the scout. No, no; instead of throwing away strength and opportunity by crossing to the fort, we lay by, under the bank of the Hudson, waiting to watch the movements of the Hurons."

"You were, then, witnesses of all that passed?"

"Not of all; for Indian sight is too keen to be easily cheated, and we kept close."

"You saw our capture?" Heyward next demanded.

"We heard it," was the significant answer. "An Indian yell is plain language to men who have passed their days in the woods. But when you landed, we were driven to crawl, like serpents, beneath the leaves. Then we lost sight of you entirely, until we placed eyes on you again, trussed to the trees and ready bound for an Indian massacre."

"Our rescue was the deed of Providence. It was nearly a miracle that you did not mistake the path, for the Hurons divided, and each band had its horses."

"Ay! There we were thrown off the scent and might indeed have lost the trail, had it not been for Uncas. We took the path, however, that led into the wilderness; for we judged, and judged rightly, that the savages would hold that course with their prisoners.

But when we had followed it for many miles, without finding a single twig broken, as I had advised, my mind misgave me; especially as all the footsteps had the prints of moccasins."

"Our captors had the precaution to see us shod like themselves," said Duncan, raising a foot, and exhibiting the buckskin he wore. Then he added, "To what, then, are we indebted for our safety?"

"The outer branch of a broken bush, near the prints of one of the horses, was bent upward, as a lady breaks a flower from its stem, but all the rest were raggedly broken down, as if the strong hand of a man had been tearing them! So I concluded that the cunning scoundrels had seen the twig bent and had torn the rest, to make us believe a buck had been feeling the boughs with his antlers."

"I do believe your wisdom did not deceive you; for some such thing occurred!"

"That was easy to see," added the scout, in no degree conscious of having exhibited any extraordinary cleverness. "It then struck me the Hurons would push for this spring."

Then Hawkeye announced his determination to proceed. The sisters resumed their saddles. Duncan and David grasped their rifles and followed on their footsteps. The scout led the advance and the Mohicans brought up the rear. The whole party moved swiftly through the narrow path towards the north.

## CHAPTER 12

After a silent journey of some hours Hawkeye made a pause. Waiting until he was joined by the whole party, he spoke in tones so low and cautious that they added to the solemnity of his words, in the quiet and darkness of the place.

“Who that saw this spot could venture to say that a mighty army was at rest among yonder silent trees and barren mountains?”

“We are then at no great distance from Fort William Henry?” said Heyward, advancing nearer to the scout.

“It is yet a long and weary path, and when and where to strike it is now our greatest difficulty. See,” he said, pointing through the trees towards a spot where a little basin of water reflected the stars from its placid bosom, “here is the ‘bloody pond’; and I am on the ground that I have not only often traveled, but over which I have fought the enemy from the rising to the setting sun.”

“Ha! That sheet of dull and dreary water, then, is the grave of the brave men who fell in the contest. I have heard it named, but never have I stood on its



banks before. Hist! See you nothing walking on the shore of the pond?"

"By heaven! There is a human form, and it approaches! Stand to your arms, my friends; for we know not whom we encounter."

"Qui vive?" demanded a stern, quick voice, which sounded like a challenge from another world, issuing out of that solitary and solemn place.

"What says it?" whispered the scout. "It speaks neither Indian nor English!"

"Qui vive?" repeated the same voice, which was quickly followed by the rattling of arms and a menacing attitude.

"France!" cried Heyward, advancing from the shadow of the trees to the shore of the pond, within a few yards of the sentinel.

After a brief interchange of questions and answers in French, the young soldier made a low and humble bow. Heyward added a "Bonne nuit, mon camarade," and they moved deliberately forward. They left the sentinel pacing the banks of the silent pond, little suspecting an enemy of so much boldness, and humming to himself.

"'Tis well you understood the knave!" whispered the scout, when they had gained a little distance from the place. "I soon saw that he was one of those uneasy Frenchmen; and well for him it was that his speech was friendly and his wishes kind, or a place might have been found for his bones right here."







He was interrupted by a long and heavy groan which arose from the little basin.

Heyward, glancing around, missed Chingachgook from their little band. Another groan more faint than the former was succeeded by a heavy and sullen plunge into the water, and all was as still again as if the borders of the dreary pool had never been awakened from the silence of creation. While they yet hesitated in uncertainty, the form of the Indian was seen gliding out of the thicket. As the chief rejoined them, with one hand he attached the reeking scalp of the unfortunate young Frenchman to his girdle, and with the other he replaced the knife and tomahawk that had drunk his blood. He then took his place with the air of a man who believed he had done a deed of merit.

The scout dropped one end of his rifle to the earth, and leaning his hands on the other, he stood musing in profound silence. Then shaking his head in a mournful manner, he muttered, "I'm sorry that such a death has befallen that gay young boy from the old countries."

"Enough!" said Heyward. "'Tis done; and though better it were left undone, it cannot be helped. You see we are, too obviously, within the sentinels of the enemy. What course do you propose to follow?"

"Yes," said Hawkeye, rousing himself again, "'tis, as you say, too late to harbor further thoughts about it. Ay, the French have surrounded the fort, and we

have a delicate needle to thread in passing them.”

“And but little time to do it in,” added Heyward, glancing his eyes upward toward the bank of vapor that concealed the setting moon.

“And little time to do it in!” repeated the scout. “The thing may be done in two fashions.”

“Name them quickly, for time presses.”

“One would be to dismount the girls and let their beasts range the plain. By sending the Mohicans in front, we might then cut a lane through their sentries and enter the fort over the dead bodies.”

“It will not do—it will not do!” interrupted the generous Heyward. “A soldier might force his way in this manner, but never with such a convoy.”

“’Twould be, indeed, a bloody path for tender feet to wade in,” returned the equally reluctant scout; “but I thought it befitting my manhood to name it. We must then turn on our trail and get outside the line of their look-outs, when we will bend short to the west, and enter the mountains. There I can hide you, so that all the devil’s hounds in Montcalm’s pay would be thrown off the scent for months to come.”

“Let it be done, and that instantly.”

Further words were unnecessary; for Hawkeye, merely uttering the command to “follow,” moved along the route by which they had just entered their present critical and even dangerous situation. Their progress was guarded and without noise; for none knew at what moment a passing patrol or a crouching picket of the enemy might rise upon their path.

Hawkeye soon deviated from the line of their retreat and struck off towards the mountains. At length the party began slowly to climb. When they came out of the stunted woods upon a flat and mossy rock that formed its summit, it was morning. Far below them they saw Fort William Henry surrounded by the army of the French general Montcalm.

“See!” exclaimed the scout, unconsciously directing the attention of Cora to the quarters of her own father. “How that shot has made the stones fly from the side of the commandant’s house! Ay! these Frenchers will pull it to pieces faster than it was put together, solid and thick though it be.”

“Heyward, I sicken at the sight of danger that I cannot share,” said Cora. “Let us go to Montcalm, and demand admission.”

“You would not find the tent of the Frenchman with the hair on your head,” said the blunt scout. “If I had but one of the thousand boats which lie empty along that shore, it might be done. Ha! Here will soon be an end of the firing, for yonder comes a fog that will turn day to night, and make an Indian arrow more dangerous than a moulded cannon. Now, if you are equal to the work and will follow, I will make a push; for I long to get down into that camp, if it be only to scatter some Huron dogs that I see lurking in the skirts of yonder thicket of birch.”

“We are equal,” said Cora firmly; “on such an errand we will follow to any danger.”

The scout turned to her with a smile of honest and



cordial approval as he answered, "I would I had a thousand men that feared death as little as you! I'd send the enemy back into their den again before the week was ended. But hurry," he added, turning from her to the rest of the party, "the fog comes rolling down so fast, we shall have just the time to meet it on the plain and use it as a cover. Remember, if any accident should befall me, keep the air blowing on your left cheeks—or rather, follow the Mohicans; they'd scent their way, be it in day or be it at night."

He then waved his hand for them to follow and threw himself down the steep hill with free, but careful footsteps. Heyward assisted the sisters to descend, and in a few minutes they were all far down a mountain whose sides they had climbed with much toil and pain.

The direction taken by Hawkeye soon brought the travelers to the level of the plain, nearly opposite the western part of the fort, which lay about half a mile away. He halted to allow Duncan to come up with his charge. In their eagerness, they had advanced before the fog, which was rolling heavily down the lake. It became necessary to pause until the mists had obscured the camp of the enemy in their fleecy mantle. The Mohicans profited by the delay to steal out of the woods and make a survey of surrounding objects. They were followed by the scout, who sought to obtain some faint knowledge for himself of the immediate locality.

In a few moments he returned, his face reddened with vexation, while he muttered his disappointment.

“Here has the cunning Frenchman been posting a picket directly in our path,” he said; “redskins and whites; and we shall be as likely to fall into their midst as to pass them in the fog!”

“Cannot we make a circuit to avoid the danger,” said Heyward, “and come into our path again when it is passed?”

“Who that once bends from the line of his march in a fog can tell when or how to turn to find it again! The mists of Horican are not like the curls from a peace-pipe, or the smoke which settles about a mosquito fire.”

He was yet speaking when a crashing sound was heard, and a cannon-ball entered the thicket, striking the body of a sapling and rebounding to the earth. The Indians followed instantly like busy attendants on the terrible messenger, and Uncas commenced speaking earnestly and with much action in the Delaware tongue.

“It may be so, lad,” muttered the scout, when he had ended; “for desperate fevers are not to be treated like a toothache. Come, then, the fog is shutting in.”

“Stop!” cried Heyward. “First explain your expectations.”

“’Tis soon done, and a small hope it is; but it is better than nothing. This shot that you see,” added the scout, kicking the harmless iron with his foot,

“has ploughed the earth in its road from the fort, and we shall hunt for the furrow it has made, when all other signs may fail. No more words, but follow, or the fog may leave us in the middle of our path, a mark for both armies to shoot at.”

They had got over nearly half the distance to the friendly fort when their ears were greeted with the fierce summons, apparently within twenty feet of them, of—

“*Qui va là?*”

“Push on!” whispered the scout, once more bending to the left.

“Push on!” repeated Heyward. Then the summons was renewed by a dozen voices, each of which seemed charged with menace.

Suddenly the fog was stirred by the explosion of fifty muskets. Happily, the aim was bad, and the bullets cut the air in a direction a little different from that taken by the fugitives. The outcry was renewed, and the order to fire again was too plainly audible. When Heyward briefly explained the meaning of the words they heard, Hawkeye halted and spoke with quick decision and great firmness.

“Let us deliver our fire,” he said; “they will believe it an attack and give way, or they will wait for reinforcements.”

The scheme was well conceived, but failed in its effect. The instant the French heard the pieces, it seemed as if the plain were alive with men, muskets



rattling along its whole extent, from the shores of the lake to the farthest boundary of the woods.

“We shall draw their entire army upon us and bring on a general assault,” said Duncan. “Lead on, my friend, for your own life and ours.”

The scout seemed willing to comply; but, in the hurry of the moment and in the change of position, he had lost the direction. In vain he turned either cheek towards the light air; they felt equally cool. In this dilemma, Uncas lighted on the furrow of the cannon-ball, where it had cut the ground in three adjacent ant-hills.

“Give me the range!” said Hawkeye, bending to catch a glimpse of the direction and then instantly moving onward.

Cries, oaths, voices calling to each other, and the reports of muskets were now quick and incessant, and, apparently, on every side of them. Suddenly a strong glare of light flashed across the scene. The fog rolled upwards in thick wreaths, and several cannon belched across the plain, and the roar was thrown heavily back from the bellowing echoes of the mountain.

“’Tis from the fort!” exclaimed Hawkeye, turning short on his tracks. “And we, like stricken fools were rushing to the woods, under the very knives of the Hurons.”

The instant their mistake was corrected, the whole party retraced the error with the utmost diligence. Duncan willingly relinquished the support of Cora to

the arm of Uncas, and Cora as readily accepted the welcome assistance. Men, hot and angry in pursuit, were evidently on their footsteps, and each instant threatened their capture, if not their destruction.

“Stand firm and be ready, my gallant 60ths!” suddenly exclaimed a voice above them. “Wait to see the enemy; fire low.”

“Father! Father!” exclaimed a piercing cry from out the mist. “It is I! Alice! O! Save your daughters!”

“Hold!” shouted the former speaker, in the awful tones of parental agony, the sound reaching even to the woods and rolling back in solemn echo. “’Tis she! God has restored me my children! Throw open the gate; to the field, my men, to the field. Drive off these dogs of France with your steel.”

Duncan heard the grating of the rusty hinges. Darting to the spot, directed by the sound, he met a long line of soldiers, his own battalion of the royal Americans. Flying to their head, he soon swept every trace of his pursuers from before the fort.

For an instant Cora and Alice had stood trembling and bewildered by this unexpected desertion; but before either had leisure for speech or thought, an officer of gigantic frame rushed out of the body of the mist and folded them to him.

“For this I thank thee, Lord! Let danger come as it will, thy servant is now prepared!”

## CHAPTER 13

A few succeeding days were passed amid the privations, the uproar, and the dangers of the siege, which was vigorously pressed by a power against whom Munro possessed no competent means of resistance. It appeared as if General Webb had utterly forgotten the plight of his countrymen. Montcalm had filled the woods with his savages, every yell and whoop from whom rang through the British encampment, chilling the hearts of men who already realized the danger.

When all hope for reinforcements from General Webb was gone, Montcalm graciously offered to spare the lives and arms of the courageous British if they yielded the fort. Munro accepted the terms, for the alternative was complete destruction.

When the time arrived to give up the fort, Munro appeared among his silent troops, firm but dejected. Duncan was touched at the quiet and impressive exhibition of his grief. He had discharged his own duty, and he now pressed to the side of the old man to know in what particular he might serve him.

“My daughters,” was the brief but expressive reply.



“Good heavens! Are not arrangements already made for their convenience?”

“Today I am only a soldier, Major Heyward,” said the veteran. “All that you see here claim alike to be my children.”

Duncan had heard enough. Without losing one of those moments which had now become so precious, he flew towards the quarters of Munro, in quest of the sisters. He found them already prepared to depart. Though the cheeks of Cora were pale and her countenance anxious, she had lost none of her firmness; but the eyes of Alice were inflamed and betrayed how long and bitterly she had wept. They both, however, received the young man with undisguised pleasure; Cora, for a novelty, being the first to speak.

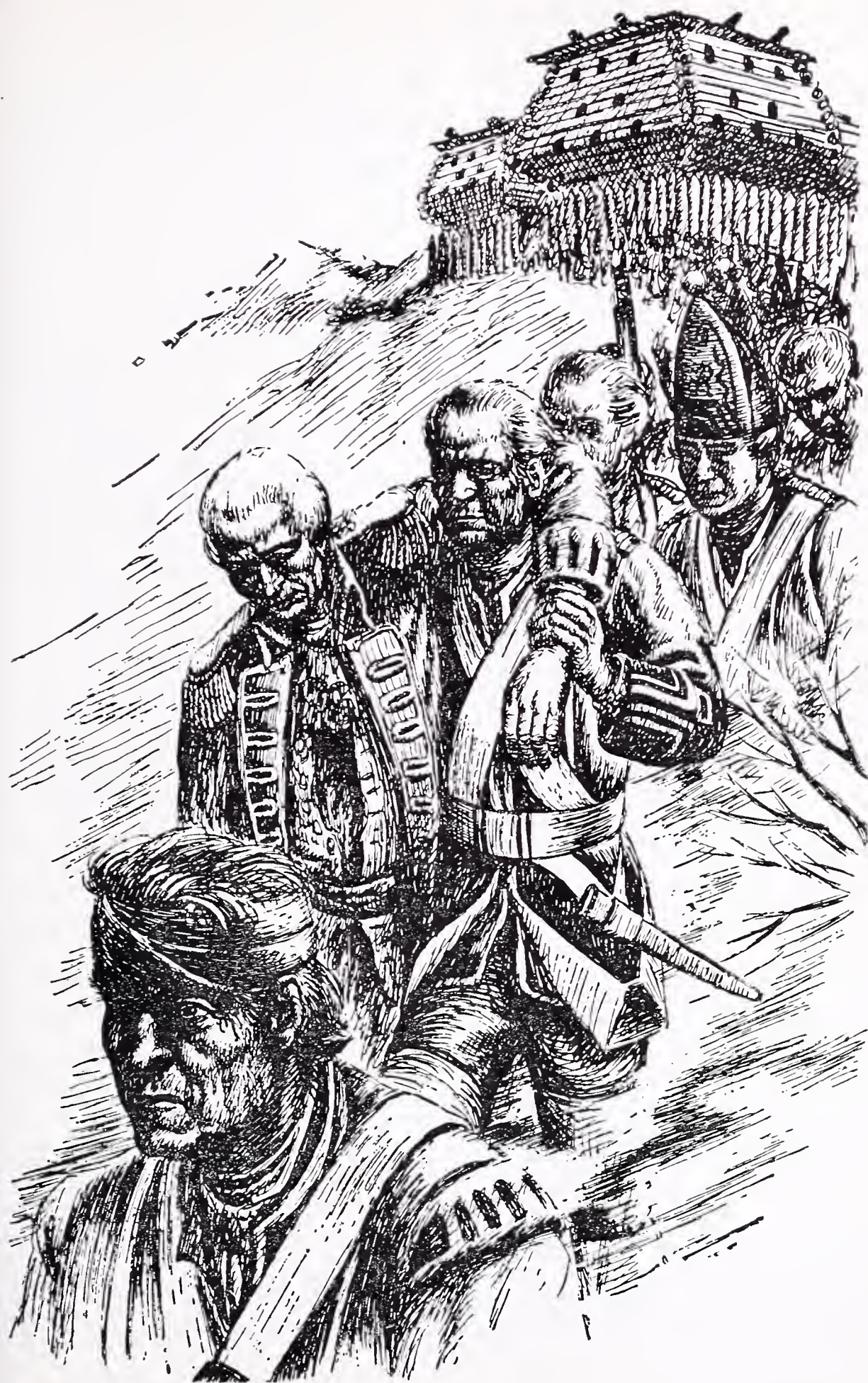
“The fort is lost,” she said, with a melancholy smile; “though our good name, I trust, remains.”

“’Tis brighter than ever. But, dearest Miss Munro, it is time to think less of others and to make some provision for yourself. Military usage, pride—that pride which you so much value yourself—demands that your father and I should for a little while continue with the troops. Then where to seek a proper protector for you against the confusion and chances of such a scene?”

“None is necessary,” returned Cora. “Who will dare to injure or insult the daughter of such a father at a time like this?”

“I would not leave you alone,” continued the youth,









looking about him in a hurried manner, "for the command of the best regiment in the pay of the king. Remember, our Alice is not gifted with all your firmness, and God only knows the terror she might endure."

"You may be right," Cora replied, smiling again, but far more sadly than before. "Listen! Chance has already sent us a friend when he is most needed, David Gamut."

Duncan addressed David, "It will be your duty to see that none dare to approach the ladies with any rude intention or to offer insult or taunt at the misfortune of their brave father."

"Yes."

"It is possible that the Indians and stragglers of the enemy may intrude. In this case remind them of the terms of the surrender and threaten to report their conduct to Montcalm. A word will be enough."

"If not, I have that here which will help," returned David, exhibiting his hymn book with an air in which meekness and confidence were singularly blended. "Here are words which, uttered with proper emphasis and in measured time, will quiet the most unruly temper."

"Enough," said Heyward, interrupting, "we understand each other; it is time that we should now assume our respective duties."

By this time the signal of departure had been given, and the head of the English column was in motion. The sisters started at the sound. Glancing around,

they saw the white uniforms of the French grenadiers, who had already taken possession of the gates of the fort.

Alice clung to the arm of her sister, and together they left the parade ground, accompanied by the moving throng that surrounded them.

As every vehicle was occupied by the sick and wounded, Cora had decided to endure the fatigues of a foot march, rather than interfere with their comforts. Indeed, many a maimed and feeble soldier was compelled to drag his exhausted limbs in the rear of the columns for the want of the necessary means of conveyance. The whole, however, was in motion; the weak and wounded, groaning and in suffering; their comrades, silent and sullen; and the women and children in terror.

As the confused and timid throng left the protecting mounds of the fort and issued on the open plain, the whole scene was at once presented to their eyes. At a little distance on the right and somewhat in the rear, the French army stood to their arms.

Living masses of the English were moving slowly across the plain. Along the sweeping borders of the woods hung a dark cloud of savages, eyeing the passage of their enemies and hovering, at a distance, like vultures who were only kept from swooping on their prey by the presence and restraint of a superior army. A few had straggled among the conquered columns,

where they stalked in sullen discontent, attentive observers of the moving multitude.

The advance, with Heyward at its head, had already reached the pass and was slowly disappearing, when the attention of Cora was drawn to a collection of stragglers. An argument was in progress between a soldier and an Indian. Voices grew loud and angry, and a hundred savages appeared, as if by magic, where a dozen only had been seen a minute before. It was then that Cora saw the form of Magua gliding among his countrymen and speaking with his fatal and artful eloquence. The mass of women and children stopped and hovered together like alarmed and fluttering birds. But the Indian was soon satisfied and the different bodies again moved slowly onward.

The savages now fell back and seemed content to let their enemies advance without further annoyance. But as the female crowd approached them, the gaudy colors of a shawl attracted the eyes of a wild Huron. He advanced to seize it without the least hesitation. The woman, more in terror than through love of the ornament, wrapped her child in the coveted article and folded both more closely to her. Cora was in the act of speaking, with an intent to advise the woman to abandon the trifle, when the savage relinquished his hold of the shawl and tore the screaming infant from her arms. Abandoning everything to the greedy grasp of those around her, the mother darted to reclaim her



child. The Indian smiled grimly and extended one hand in sign of a willingness to exchange, while with the other he flourished the babe over his head, holding it by the feet as if to enhance the value of the ransom.

“Here—here—there—all—any—everything!” exclaimed the breathless woman, tearing the lighter articles of dress from her person with trembling fingers. “Take all, but give me my babe!”

The savage spurned the worthless rags and perceiving that the shawl had already become a prize to another, his sullen smile changed to a gleam of ferocity. He dashed the head of the infant against a rock and cast its quivering remains to her very feet. For an instant the mother stood like a statue of despair, looking wildly down; and then she raised her eyes and countenance towards heaven, as if calling on God to curse the perpetrator of the foul deed. Maddened at his disappointment and excited at the sight of blood, the Huron drove his tomahawk into her own brain. The mother sank under the blow, and fell, grasping at her child in death with the same engrossing love that had caused her to cherish it when living.

At that dangerous moment Magua placed his hands to his mouth and raised the fatal and appalling whoop. The scattered Indians started at the well-known cry. Immediately there arose such a yell along the plain and through the wood as seldom burst from human lips before. They who heard it listened with a curdling horror at the heart.

More than two thousand raving savages broke from the forest at the signal and threw themselves across the fatal plain with instinctive speed. We shall not dwell on the revolting horrors that succeeded. Death was everywhere and in his most terrific and disgusting aspects. Resistance only served to inflame the murderers, who inflicted their furious blows long after their victims were beyond the power of their resentment. The flow of blood might be likened to the out-breaking of a torrent.

The trained bodies of the troops threw themselves quickly into solid masses, endeavoring to awe their assailants by the imposing appearance of a military front. The experiment in some measure succeeded, though far too many allowed their unloaded muskets to be torn from their hands in the vain hope of appeasing the savages.

In such a scene none had leisure to note the fleeting moments. It might have been ten minutes that the sisters had stood riveted to one spot, horror-stricken and nearly helpless. When the first blow was struck, their screaming companions had pressed upon them in a body, rendering flight impossible. Now that fear or death had scattered most, if not all, from around them, they saw no avenue open, but such as conducted to the tomahawks of their foes. On every side arose shrieks, groans, exhortations, and curses.

At this moment Alice caught a glimpse of the vast form of her father, moving rapidly across the plain in the direction of the French army. He was, in truth,

proceeding to Montcalm, fearless of every danger, to claim the tardy escort for which he had before arranged. Fifty glittering axes and barbed spears were offered unheeded at his life, but the savages respected his rank and calmness, even in their fury. The dangerous weapons were brushed aside by the still nervous arm of the veteran, or fell of themselves, after menacing an act that it would seem no one had courage to perform. Fortunately, the vindictive Magua was searching for his victim in the very band the veteran had just quitted.

“Father—father—we are here!” shrieked Alice, as he passed at no great distance, without appearing to heed them. “Come to us, father, or we die!”

The cry was repeated and in terms and tones that might have melted a heart of stone, but it was unanswered. Once, indeed, the old man appeared to catch the sounds, for he paused and listened; but Alice had dropped senseless on the earth, and Cora had sunk at her side, hovering in untiring tenderness over her lifeless form. Munro shook his head in disappointment and proceeded, bent on the high duty of his station.

“Lady,” said Gamut, who, helpless and useless as he was, had not yet dreamed of deserting his trust, “let us up and fly.”

“Go,” said Cora, still gazing at her unconscious sister; “save yourself. To me you can not be of further use.”

David understood the unyielding character of her resolution.



"It will not hurt," he said, "to try the power of music here."

Then raising his voice to its highest tones, he poured out a strain so powerful as to be heard even amid the din of that bloody field. More than one savage rushed towards them, thinking to rifle the unprotected sisters of their attire and bear away their scalps; but when they found this strange and unmoved figure riveted to his post, they paused to listen. Astonishment soon changed to admiration, and they passed on to other and less courageous victims, openly expressing their satisfaction at the firmness with which the white warrior sang his death song.

Encouraged and deluded by his success, David exerted all his powers to extend what he believed so holy an influence. The unwonted sounds caught the ears of a distant savage, who flew raging from group to group like one who, scorning to touch the vulgar herd, hunted for some victim more worthy of his renown. It was Magua, who uttered a yell of pleasure when he beheld his ancient prisoners again at his mercy.

"Come," he said, laying his soiled hands on the dress of Cora, "the wigwam of the Huron is still open. Is it not better than this place?"

"Away!" cried Cora, veiling her eyes from his revolting aspect.

The Indian laughed tauntingly, as he held up his reeking hand.

"Monster! There is blood, oceans of blood, upon your soul; your spirit has moved this scene."

“Magua is a great chief!” returned the exulting savage. “Will you go to his tribe?”

“Never! Strike, if you will, and complete your revenge.”

He hesitated a moment. Then catching the light and senseless form of Alice in his arms, the subtle Indian moved swiftly across the plain towards the woods.

“Hold!” shrieked Cora, following wildly on his footsteps. “Release the child! Wretch! What is it you do?”

But Magua was deaf to her voice; or rather he knew his power and was determined to maintain it.

“Stay—lady—stay,” called Gamut after the unconscious Cora. “The holy charm is beginning to be felt, and soon shall you see this horrid tumult stilled.”

Perceiving that, in his turn, he was unheeded, the faithful David followed the distracted sister, raising his voice again in sacred song. In this manner they crossed the plain through the flying, the wounded, and the dead. Cora would have fallen, more than once, under the blows of her savage enemies, but for David, who stalked in her rear and who now appeared to the astonished natives gifted with the protecting spirit of madness.

Magua, who knew how to avoid the more pressing dangers and also to elude pursuit, entered the woods through a low ravine, where he quickly found the horses which the travelers had abandoned so shortly









before. Laying Alice on one of the horses, he made a sign to Cora to mount the other.

Notwithstanding the horror excited by the presence of her captor, there was a relief in escaping from the bloody scene on the plain, to which Cora could not be altogether insensible. She took her seat and held forth her arms for her sister with an air of entreaty and love that even the Huron could not deny. Placing Alice, then, on the same animal with Cora, he seized the bridle and commenced his route by plunging deeper into the forest. David, perceiving that he was left alone, utterly disregarded as a subject too worthless even to destroy, threw his long legs across the saddle of the beast they had deserted and made such progress in the pursuit as the difficulties of the path permitted.

They soon began to ascend. Here Magua allowed them to dismount. Notwithstanding their own captivity, curiosity induced them to gaze at the sickening sight below.

The cruel work was still unchecked. On every side the captured were flying before their relentless persecutors. Nor was the sword of death stayed until greed got the mastery of revenge. Then, indeed, the shrieks of the wounded and the yells of their murderers grew less frequent, until finally the cries of horror were lost to their ear, or were drowned in the piercing whoops of the triumphant savages.

## CHAPTER 14

The third day after the capture of the fort the shores of the lake were possessed by stillness and death. The blood-stained conquerors had departed; and their camp, which had so lately rung with the merry rejoicings of a victorious army, lay a silent and deserted city of huts. The fortress was a smouldering ruin.

About an hour before the setting of the sun on that day five men appeared from the narrow vista of trees, where the path to the Hudson entered the forest, and advanced in the direction of the ruined fort. The group included the Mohicans and their white friend, the scout, together with Munro and Heyward. At first their progress was slow and guarded, as though they entered with reluctance amid the horrors of the spot, or dreaded the renewal of its frightful incidents. They found no sign of Cora or Alice among the mangled victims of the massacre.

Suddenly Uncas was seen tearing from a bush and waving in triumph a fragment of the green riding-veil of Cora. The movement, the exhibition, and the cry, which again burst from the lips of the young



Mohican, instantly drew the whole party about him.

“My child!” said Munro, speaking quickly and wildly. “Give me my child!”

“Uncas will try,” was the short and touching answer.

The simple but meaning assurance was lost on the father, who seized the piece of gauze and crushed it in his hand while his eyes roamed fearfully among the bushes, as if he equally dreaded and hoped for the secrets they might reveal.

“Here are no dead,” said Heyward; “the storm seems not to have passed this way.”

“That’s manifest and clearer than the heavens above our heads,” returned the undisturbed scout; “but either she or they that have robbed her have passed the bush. Uncas, you are right; the dark-hair has been here, and she has fled like a frightened fawn to the wood. None who could fly would remain to be murdered. Let us search for the marks she left; for to Indian eyes, I sometimes think even a humming bird leaves his trail in the air.”

The young Mohican darted away at the suggestion, and the scout had hardly done speaking, when the former raised a cry of success from the margin of the forest. On reaching the spot, the anxious party perceived another portion of the veil fluttering on the lower branch of a beech.

“Softly, softly,” said the scout, extending his long

rifle in front of the eager Heyward; "we now know our work, but the beauty of the trail must not be deformed. A step too soon may give us hours of trouble. We have them though; that much is beyond denial."

"Bless you, bless you, worthy man!" exclaimed Munro. "Whither, then, have they fled, and where are my daughters?"

"The path they have taken depends on many chances. If they have gone alone, they are quite as likely to move in a circle as straight, and they may be within a dozen miles of us; but if the Hurons have laid hands on them, 'tis probable they are now near the border of Canada. But what does that matter?" continued the deliberate scout, observing the powerful anxiety and disappointment the listeners exhibited. "Here are the Mohicans and I on one end of the trail. Rely on it, we'll find the other, though they should be hundreds of miles apart! Gently, gently, Uncas; you are as impatient as a man in the settlements; you forget that light feet leave but faint marks!"

"Hugh!" exclaimed Chingachgook, who had been occupied in examining an opening that had evidently been made through the low underbrush.

"Here is the footstep of a man," cried Heyward, bending over the indicated spot; "he has trod in the margin of this pool, and the mark cannot be mistaken. They are captives."

"Better so than left to starve in the wilderness,"

returned the scout; "and they will leave a wider trail. I would wager fifty beaver skins against as many flints that the Mohicans and I enter their wigwams within the month! Stoop to it, Uncas, and try what you can make of the moccasin; for moccasin it plainly is, and no shoe."

The young Mohican bent over the track. Removing the scattered leaves from around the place, he examined it. At length he arose from his knees, satisfied with the result of the examination.

"Well, boy," demanded the attentive scout, "what does it say? Can you make anything of the tell-tale?"

"Le Renard Subtil! Magua!"

"Ha! That rampaging devil again! There never will be an end of his loping, till 'Killdeer' has said a friendly word to him. Ay, 'tis a settled thing; here then have passed the dark-hair and Magua."

"And not Alice?" demanded Heyward.

"Of her we have not yet seen the signs," returned the scout, looking closely around at the trees, the bushes, and the ground. "What have we there? Uncas, bring here the thing you see dangling from yonder thorn-bush."

When the Indian had complied, the scout received the prize. Holding it on high, he laughed in his silent but heartfelt manner.

"'Tis the tooting instrument of the singer, David Gamut," he said.



“At least, he has been faithful to his trust,” said Heyward; “and Cora and Alice are not without a friend.”

The trail was not easy to follow, but the Mohicans found signs that others could not see. After days of arduous hiking through the wilderness in pursuit of Magua and the girls the little party came at last to a point where the trail seemed to end.

## CHAPTER 15

Hawkeye was the first to speak.

“When I found that the home path of the Hurons ran north,” he said, “it did not need the judgment of many long years to tell that Magua would follow the valleys and keep between the waters of the Hudson and the Horican. Yet here are we, and not a sign of a trail have we crossed! Human nature is weak, and it is possible we may not have taken the proper trail.”

“Heaven protect us from such an error!” exclaimed Duncan. “Let us retrace our steps and examine as we go with keener eyes. Has Uncas no counsel to offer in our difficulty?”

The young Mohican cast a glance at his father, but maintaining his quiet and reserved look, he continued silent. Chingachgook had caught the look, and motioning with his hand, he bade him speak. The moment this permission was accorded, the countenance of Uncas changed from grave composure to a gleam of intelligence and joy. Bounding forward like a deer, he sprang up the side of a little slope, a few yards in advance and stood exulting over a spot of fresh earth that looked as though it had been recently upturned by the passage of some heavy animal. The eyes of the

whole party followed the unexpected movement and read their success in the air of triumph that the youth assumed.

“’Tis the trail!” exclaimed the scout, advancing to the spot. “The lad is quick of sight and keen of wit for his years.”

“’Tis extraordinary that he should have withheld his knowledge so long,” muttered Duncan, at his elbow.

“It would have been more wonderful had he spoken without a bidding. No, no; your young white, who gathers his learning from books and can measure what he knows by the page, may believe that his knowledge, like his legs, outruns that of his father; but where experience is the master, the scholar is made to know the value of years and respects them accordingly.”

“See!” said Uncas, pointing north and south, at the evident marks of the broad trail on either side of him. “The dark-hair has gone towards the frost.”

“Hound never ran on a more beautiful scent,” responded the scout, dashing forward at once on the indicated route. “We are favored, greatly favored, and can follow with high noses. Ay, here are both your waddling beasts.”

The spirits of the scout and the astonishing success of the chase gave hope to the whole party. Their advance was rapid and made with as much confidence as a traveler would proceed along a wide highway.



If a rock, or a brook, or a bit of earth harder than common severed the links of the clue they followed, the true eye of the scout recovered them at a distance and seldom made delay necessary.

Their progress was helped by the certainty that Magua had found it necessary to journey through the valleys, a circumstance which rendered the general direction of the route sure. Nor had the Huron entirely neglected the arts uniformly practised by the natives when retiring in front of an enemy. False trails and sudden turnings were frequent, wherever a brook or the formation of the ground rendered them feasible; but his pursuers were rarely deceived and never failed to detect their error before they had lost either time or distance on the deceptive track.

By the middle of the afternoon they were following the route of the declining sun. After descending an eminence to a low bottom, through which a stream glided, they suddenly came to a place where the party of Le Renard had made a halt. Extinguished brands were lying around a spring and the trees bore evident marks of having been browsed by the horses. At a little distance, Heyward discovered and contemplated with tender emotion the small bower under which he believed that Cora and Alice had reposed. But while the earth was trodden and the footsteps of both men and beasts were so plainly visible around the place, the trail appeared to have ended suddenly.

It was easy to follow the track of the horses, but

they seemed only to have wandered without guides or any other object than the pursuit of food. At length Uncas, who with his father had endeavored to trace the route of the horses, came upon a sign of their presence that was quite recent. Before following the clue, he communicated his success to his companions. While the latter were consulting on the circumstance, the youth reappeared, leading the two horses with their saddles broken and the housings soiled, as though they had been permitted to run at will for several days.

“What does this mean?” said Duncan, turning pale, and glancing his eyes around him, as if he feared the brush and leaves were about to give up some horrid secret.

“That our march is come to a quick end and that we are in an enemy’s country,” returned the scout. “Had the knaves been pressed and the gentle ones needed horses to keep up with the party, he might have taken their scalps; but without an enemy at his heels and with such rugged beasts as these, he would not hurt a hair of their heads. It is true that horses are here, but the Hurons are gone. Let us then hunt for the path by which they departed.”

Hawkeye and the Mohicans now applied themselves to their task in good earnest. A circle of a few hundred feet in circumference was drawn, and each of the party took a segment for his portion. The exam-

ination, however, resulted in no discovery. The impressions of footsteps were numerous, but they all appeared like those of men who had wandered about the spot without any design to quit it. Again the scout and his companions made the circuit of the halting-place, each slowly following the other, until they assembled in the center once more, no wiser than when they started.

“Such cunning is not without its deviltry,” exclaimed Hawkeye, when he met the disappointed looks of his assistants. “We must get down to it, Chingachgook, beginning at the spring and going over the ground by inches. The Huron shall never brag in his tribe that he has a foot which leaves no print.”

Setting the example himself, the scout engaged in the scrutiny with renewed zeal. Not a leaf was left unturned. The sticks were removed, and the stones lifted; for Indian cunning was known frequently to adopt these objects as covers, laboring with the utmost patience and industry, to conceal each footstep as they proceeded. Still no discovery was made.

At length Uncas, whose activity had enabled him to achieve his portion of the task the soonest, raked the earth across the turbid little stream which ran from the spring and diverted its course into another channel. As soon as its narrow bed below the dam was dry, he stooped over it with keen and curious eyes. A cry of exultation immediately announced the



success of the young warrior. The whole party crowded to the spot where Uncas pointed out the impression of a moccasin in the moist bed.

“The lad will be an honor to his people,” said Hawk-eye regarding the trail with much admiration, “ay, and a thorn in the sides of the Hurons. Yet that is not the footstep of an Indian! The weight is too much on the heel and the toes are squared. Run back, Uncas, and bring me the size of the singer’s foot. You will find a beautiful print of it just opposite yon rock on the hillside.”

While the youth was engaged in this commission, the scout and Chingachgook were attentively considering the impressions. The measurements agreed, and the former unhesitatingly pronounced that the footstep was that of David, who had, once more, been made to exchange his shoes for moccasins.

“I can now read the whole of it, as plainly as if I had seen the arts of Le Subtil,” he added; “the singer, being a man whose gifts lay chiefly in his throat and feet, was made to go first. The others had trod in his steps, imitating their formation. As for the girls, the scoundrel has found a way to carry them, until he supposed he had thrown any followers off the scent. My life on it, we’ll see their pretty little feet again, before many yards go by.”

The whole party now proceeded, following the course of the stream, keeping anxious eyes on the regular impressions. The water soon flowed into its

bed again, but watching the ground on either side, the foresters pursued their way content with knowing that the trail lay beneath. More than half a mile was passed, before the stream rippled close around the base of an extensive and dry rock. Here they paused to make sure that the Hurons had not quitted the water.

It was fortunate they did so, for the quick and active Uncas soon found the impression of a foot on a bunch of moss, where it would seem an Indian had unintentionally trodden. Pursuing the direction given by this discovery, he entered the neighboring thicket and struck the trail, as fresh and obvious as it had been before they reached the spring. Another shout announced the good fortune of the youth and at once ended the search.

“Ay, it has been planned with Indian judgment,” said the scout, when the party was assembled around the place, “and would have blinded white eyes.”

“Shall we proceed?” demanded Heyward.

“Softly, softly; we know our path; but it is good to examine the formation of things. All is plain but one thing, which is the manner that the knave contrived to get the gentle ones along the blind trail. Even a Huron would be too proud to let their feet touch the water.”

“Will this assist in explaining the difficulty?” said Heyward, pointing towards the fragments of a sort of handbarrow that had been rudely constructed of

boughs and bound together and which now seemed carelessly cast aside as useless.

“’Tis explained!” cried the delighted Hawkeye. “If those scoundrels have passed a minute, they have spent hours in striving to conceal their trail! Well, I’ve known them to waste a day in the same manner to as little purpose.”

“My daughters are unequal to these hardships,” said Munro. “We shall find their fainting forms in this desert.”

“Of that there is little cause of fear,” returned the scout, slowly shaking his head; “this is a firm, straight and light step. See, the heel has hardly touched the ground. There the dark-hair has made a little jump from root to root. No, no; neither of the girls was near fainting. Now, the singer was beginning to be foot-sore and leg-weary, as is plain by his trail. There, you see, he slipped; here he has traveled wide and tottered; and there again, it looks as though he journeyed on snow-shoes. Ay, ay, a man who uses his throat altogether can hardly give his legs a proper training.”

From such undeniable testimony did the practiced woodsman arrive at the truth, with nearly as much certainty and precision as if he had been a witness of all those events which his ingenuity so easily explained. Cheered by these assurances and satisfied by a reasoning that was so obvious, the party resumed its course, after making a short halt to take a hurried meal.



When the meal was ended, the scout cast a glance upwards at the setting sun and pushed forward with rapidity. As the Hurons had made no further efforts to conceal their footsteps, the progress of the pursuers was no longer delayed by uncertainty. Before an hour had elapsed, however, the speed of Hawkeye lessened and his head, instead of maintaining its former direct and forward look, began to turn suspiciously from side to side, as if he were conscious of approaching danger. He soon stopped again and waited for the whole party to come up.

“I scent the Hurons,” he said, speaking to the Mohicans; “yonder is open sky, through the tree-tops, and we are getting too near their encampment. Chingachgook, you will take the hillside to the right; Uncas will bend along the brook to the left, while I will try the trail. If anything should happen, the call will be three croaks of a crow. I saw one of the birds fanning himself in the air, just beyond the dead oak—another sign that we are touching an encampment.”

The Indians departed their several ways without reply, while Hawkeye cautiously proceeded with the two gentlemen. Heyward soon pressed to the side of their guide, eager to catch an early glimpse of those enemies he had pursued with so much toil and anxiety. His companion told him to steal to the edge of the wood and wait his coming, for he wished to examine certain suspicious signs a little on one side. Duncan obeyed.

Suddenly he started and recoiled a few paces instinctively, for he found himself within a hundred yards of a stranger Indian. Recovering his self-possession on the instant, instead of sounding an alarm which might prove fatal to himself, he remained stationary, an attentive observer of the other's motions.

An instant of calm observation assured Duncan that he was undiscovered. The native was odd-looking, forlorn and miserable. Duncan was still curiously observing his new neighbor, when the scout stole silently and cautiously to his side.

"You see we have reached their settlement," whispered the young man, "for here is one of the savages himself in a very embarrassing position for our further movements."

Hawkeye started and dropped his rifle when the stranger came under his view. Then lowering the dangerous muzzle, he stretched forward his long neck, as if to assist a scrutiny that was already intensely keen.

"The imp is not a Huron," he said, "nor of any of the Canada tribes; and yet you see, by his clothes, the knave has been plundering a white. Can you see where he has put his rifle or his bow?"

"He appears to have no arms; nor does he seem to be viciously inclined."

The scout opened wide his mouth in unrestrained and heartfelt laughter, though in that silent and pe-

cular manner which danger had so long taught him to practise.

“Keep him under your rifle while I creep in behind through the brush and take him alive. Fire on no account.”

Heyward had already permitted his companion to bury part of his person in the thicket when, stretching forth an arm, he stopped him to ask, “If I see you in danger, may I not risk a shot?”

Hawkeye regarded him a moment, like one who knew not how to take the question; then nodding his head, he answered, still laughing, though inaudibly, “Fire a whole platoon, major.”

In the next moment he was concealed by the leaves. Duncan waited several minutes in feverish impatience before he caught another glimpse of the scout. Then he reappeared, creeping along the earth directly in the rear of his intended captive. Having reached within a few yards of the latter, he arose to his feet, silently and slowly. Then the uplifted hand of Hawkeye was above him. But without any apparent reason it was withdrawn, and its owner indulged in another long, though still silent fit of merriment. When the peculiar and hearty laughter of Hawkeye was ended, instead of grasping his victim by the throat, he tapped him lightly on the shoulder and exclaimed aloud, “How now, friend! Have you a mind to teach the beavers to sing?”



## CHAPTER 16

The reader may well imagine the surprise of Heyward. The suspected enemy was none other than his tried friend, David Gamut, the master of singing. The presence of the latter created so many unexpected hopes concerning the sisters that, without a moment's hesitation, the young man broke out of his ambush and sprang forward to join the two principal actors in the scene.

The merriment of Hawkeye was not easily appeased. Without ceremony and with a rough hand he twirled Gamut around on his heel and more than once affirmed that the Hurons had done themselves great credit in the fashion of his costume. Then seizing the hand of the other, he squeezed it with a grip that brought the tears into the eyes of the placid David.

"We see that you are safe; now tell us what has become of the maidens."

"They are captives to the heathen," said David; "and though greatly troubled in spirit, enjoying comfort and safety in body."

"Both?" demanded the breathless Heyward.

"Even so. Though our wayfaring has been sore and our food scanty, we have had little cause for com-

plaint, except the violence done our feelings by being thus led in captivity into a far land."

"Bless you for these very words!" exclaimed the trembling Munro.

"Where is Magua?" bluntly interrupted the scout.

"He hunts the moose today with his young men. Tomorrow, as I hear, they pass farther into these forests and nearer to the borders of Canada. The elder maiden has been taken to a neighboring people, whose lodges are situated beyond yonder black pinnacle of rock. The younger is detained among the women of the Hurons, whose dwellings are but two short miles from here."

"Alice, my gentle Alice!" murmured Heyward. "She has lost the consolation of her sister's presence!"

"Even so. But so far as praise and thanksgiving in singing can lift the spirit in trouble, she has not suffered."

"Has she then a heart for music?"

"Yes, though it must be acknowledged that, in spite of all my endeavors, the maiden weeps oftener than she smiles."

"And why are you permitted to go at large, unwatched?"

David composed his features into what he intended should express an air of modest humility, before he meekly replied, "Little be the praise to such a worm as I. But though the power of music was suspended in the terrible business of that field of blood through

which we passed, it has recovered its influence even over the souls of the heathen, and I am allowed to go and come at will."

The scout laughed, and tapping his own forehead significantly, he perhaps explained the strange indulgence more satisfactorily when he said, "The Indians never harm one they consider insane. But why, when the path lay open before your eyes, did you not strike back on your own trail and bring in the news to Fort Edward?"

The scout, remembering only his own sturdy and iron nature, had probably mentioned a task that David, under no circumstances, could have performed. But without entirely losing the meekness of his air, the latter was content to answer, "Though my soul would rejoice to visit the habitations of Christendom once more, I could not leave the girls."

Heyward continued questions concerning the past and present condition of his fellow-captives. The narrative of David was simple, and the facts but few.

Magua had waited on the mountain until a safe moment to retire presented itself, when he had descended and taken the route along the western side of Lake Horican in the direction of Canada. As the subtle Huron was familiar with the paths and well knew there was no immediate danger of pursuit, their progress had been moderate and far from fatiguing. At night the utmost care had been taken of the captives,



both to prevent injury from the damps of the woods and to guard against an escape.

On their arrival at the encampment of his people Magua, in obedience to a policy seldom departed from, separated his prisoners. Cora had been sent to a tribe that temporarily occupied an adjacent valley, though David was too ignorant of the customs and history of the natives to be able to declare anything satisfactory concerning their name or character. He only knew that they had not engaged in the late expedition against William Henry. Like the Hurons themselves, they were allies of Montcalm, and maintained a friendly though a watchful intercourse with the warlike and savage Hurons.

The Mohicans and the scout listened to his interrupted and imperfect narrative with an interest that obviously increased as he proceeded, for it became clearer that these people were members of a Delaware tribe bound in blood to the Mohicans, but now friendly with the Hurons.

The impatient Duncan now made several hasty and desperate propositions to attempt the release of the sisters. Munro seemed to shake off his calm and listened eagerly to the wild schemes of the young man. But the scout, after allowing the ardor of the lover to expend itself, found means to convince him of the folly of haste in a matter that would require their coolest judgment and utmost fortitude.

“It would be well,” he added, “to let David go in again, as usual, and for him to tarry in the lodges, giving notice to the girls of our approach, until we call him out by signal to consult.”

“Wait,” exclaimed Heyward. “I will accompany him.”

“You!” exclaimed the astonished Hawkeye. “Are you tired of seeing the sun rise and set?”

“David is a living proof that the Hurons can be merciful.”

“Ay, but David can use his throat.”

“I too can play the madman, the fool, the hero; in short, any or everything to rescue Alice, whom I love. Name your objections no longer. I am resolved.”

Hawkeye regarded the young man a moment in speechless amazement. But Duncan was not easily resisted. He waved his hand, in sign of his dislike, to all argument. Then, in more tempered language, he continued, “You have the means of disguise; change me; paint me, too, if you will; in short, alter me to anything—a fool.”

The awakened spirit of the young soldier gleamed in his eyes, and his form became imposing under its influence. Hawkeye, though too much accustomed to Indian trickery not to foresee the danger of the experiment, knew not well how to combat this sudden resolution.

Perhaps there was something in the proposal that

suited his own hardy nature. Instead of continuing to oppose the scheme of Duncan, his humor suddenly altered and he lent himself to its execution.

“Come,” he said, with a good-humored smile. “Chingachgook has many different paints. Seat yourself on the log; he can soon make a natural fool of you, and that well to your liking.”

Duncan complied; and the Mohican, who had been an attentive listener to the discourse, readily undertook the job. Long practised in all the subtle arts of his race, he drew, with great dexterity and quickness, the lines of a clown. Such exhibitions were not uncommon among the Indians. As Duncan was already sufficiently disguised in his dress, there certainly did exist some reason for believing that, with his knowledge of French, he might pass for a juggler from Ticonderoga, straggling among the allied and friendly tribes.

When he was thought to be sufficiently painted, the scout gave him much friendly advice and appointed the place where they should meet in the event of mutual success. The parting between Munro and his young friend was more melancholy. Still, the former submitted to the separation with an indifference that his warm and honest nature would never have permitted in a more healthful state of mind. The scout led Heyward aside and told him of his intention to leave the veteran in some safe encampment in care of Ching-



achgook, while he and Uncas pursued their inquiries among the people they had reason to believe were Delawares. Then renewing his cautions and advice, he concluded by saying with solemnity and warmth, "And now God bless you! You have shown a spirit that I like; for it is the gift of youth, more especially one of warm blood and a stout heart. But believe the warning of a man who has reason to know all he says to be true. You will have occasion for your best manhood, and for a sharper wit than is to be gathered in books before you outdo the cunning, or get the better of the courage of a Huron. God bless you! If the Hurons master your scalp, rely on the promise of one who has two stout warriors to back him. They shall pay for their victory with a life for every hair it holds."

Duncan shook his worthy and reluctant associate warmly by the hand, once more recommended his aged friend to the other's care and motioned to David to proceed. Hawkeye gazed after the high-spirited and adventurous young man for several moments in open admiration; then shaking his head doubtfully, he turned and led his own division of the party into the concealment of the forest.

When Duncan found himself alone with one so simple and so little qualified to render any assistance in desperate emergencies, he first began to be aware of the difficulties of the task he had undertaken. The

fading light increased the gloominess of the bleak and savage wilderness that stretched so far on every side of him. Then came the glowing image of Alice, her distress, her actual danger; and all the peril of his situation was forgotten. Cheering David, he moved on with the light and vigorous step of youth and enterprise.

## CHAPTER 17

It is unusual to find an encampment of the natives guarded by the presence of armed men. Well informed of the approach of every danger while it is yet at a distance, the Indian generally rests secure under his knowledge of the signs of the forest, and the long and difficult paths that separate him from those he has most reason to dread. Consequently David and Duncan were able to enter the camp unmolested.

The Indians accepted Duncan as a wandering Frenchman and medicine man. Since they were allies of the French, they made no objection to the presence of this supposed friend. In the midst of a conversation between Duncan and a chief, a low but fearful sound arose from the forest and was immediately succeeded by a high, shrill yell that was drawn out until it equaled the longest and most plaintive howl of the wolf. The sudden and terrible interruption caused Duncan to start from his seat, unconscious of everything but the effect produced by so frightful a cry.

Unable to command himself any longer, the youth broke from the place and presently stood in the center of a disorderly throng that included nearly everything



having life within the limits of the encampment. Men, women, and children; the aged, the infirm, the active, and the strong were out, all expressing their savage pleasure in some unexpected event. Though astounded at first by the uproar, Heyward was soon enabled to find its solution by the scene that followed.

A line of warriors issued from the woods and advanced slowly towards the dwellings. One in front bore a short pole, on which were suspended several human scalps. The startling sounds that Duncan had heard were what the whites have not inappropriately called the "death-halloo"; and each repetition of the cry was intended to announce to the tribe the fate of an enemy.

When at the distance of a few hundred feet from the lodges, the newly arrived warriors halted. Their plaintive and terrific cry, which was intended to represent equally the wailings of the deed and the triumph of the victors, had entirely ceased. One of their number now called aloud. It would be difficult to convey a suitable idea of the savage ecstasy with which his news was received.

The whole encampment, in a moment, became a scene of the most violent bustle and commotion. The warriors drew their knives. Flourishing them, they arranged themselves in two lines, forming a lane that extended from the war-party to the lodges. The squaws seized clubs, axes, or whatever weapon first

offered itself to their hands and rushed eagerly to act their part in the cruel game that was at hand.

Large piles of brush lay scattered about the clearing, and an aged squaw was firing as many as might serve to light the coming exhibition. As the flame arose, its power rendered objects at the same time more distinct and more hideous. The whole scene formed a striking picture whose frame was composed of the dark and tall border of pines. The warriors just arrived were the most distant figures.

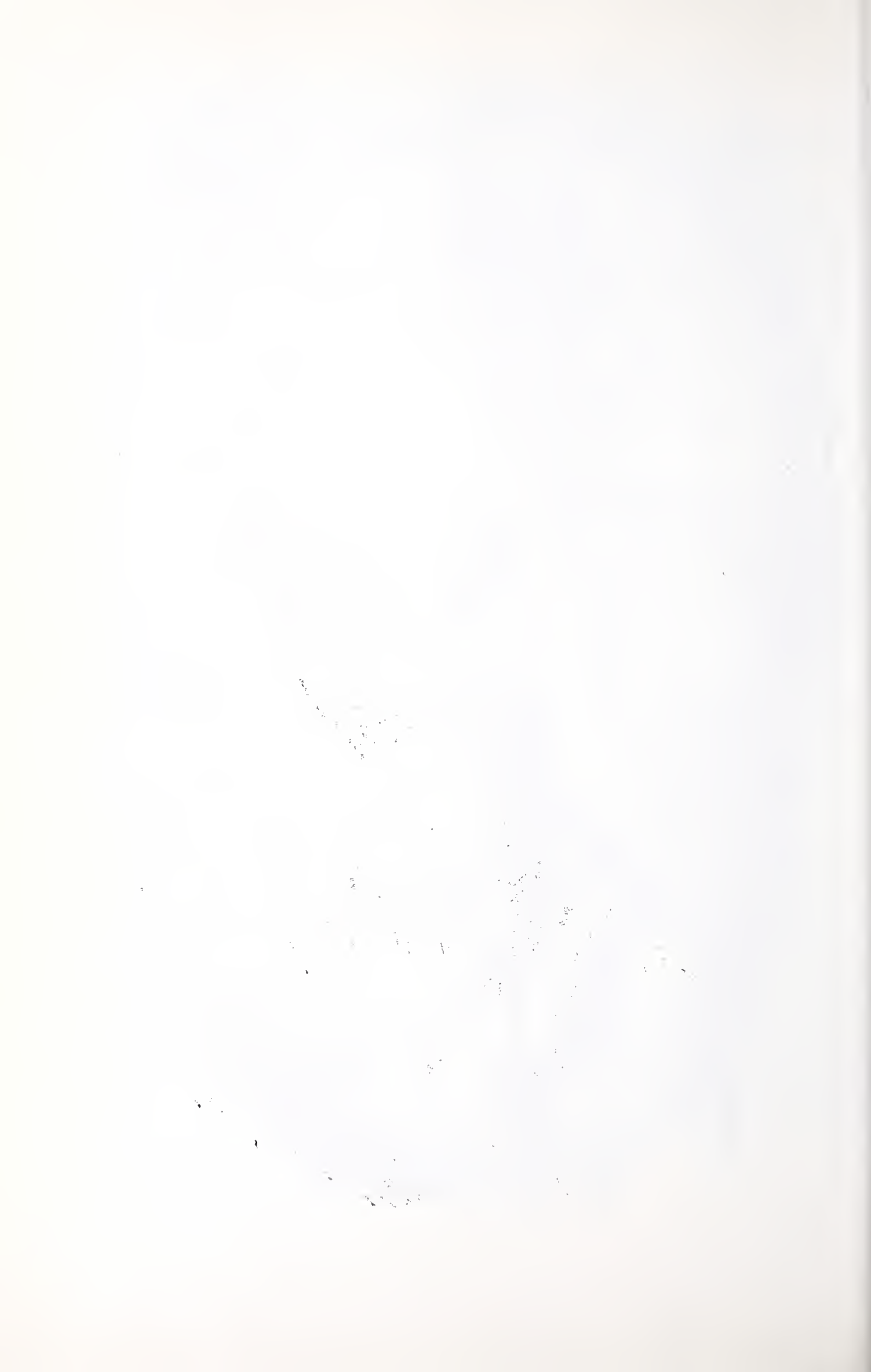
A little in advance stood two men, who were apparently selected from the rest as the principal actors in what was to follow. The light was not strong enough to render their features distinct, though it was quite evident that they were governed by very different emotions. While one stood erect and firm, prepared to meet his fate like a hero, the other bowed his head, as if paralyzed by terror or stricken with shame.

Just then the signal yell was given, and the momentary quiet which had preceded it was broken by a burst of cries that far exceeded any before heard. The most forlorn of the two victims continued motionless; but the other bounded from the place at the cry with the activity and swiftness of a deer. Instead of rushing through the hostile lines, as had been expected, he just entered the dangerous path and, before time was given for a single blow, turned short. Leaping the heads of a row of children, he gained at once the outside of the









group. The trick was answered by a hundred voices raised in oaths, and the whole of the excited multitude broke from their order and spread themselves about the place in wild confusion.

No breathing time was allowed the fugitive. There was a single moment when it seemed as if he would have reached the forest, but the whole body of his captors threw themselves before him and drove him back into the center of his relentless persecutors. Turning like a headed deer, he shot with the swiftness of an arrow through a pillar of forked flame. Passing the whole multitude harmless, he appeared on the opposite side of the clearing. Here too he was met and turned by a few of the older and more subtle of the Hurons. Once more he tried the throng, as if seeking safety in its blindness. Then several moments followed during which Duncan believed the active and courageous young stranger was lost.

Nothing could be distinguished but a dark mass of human forms in confusion. Arms, gleaming knives, and formidable clubs appeared above them, but the blows were evidently given at random. The awful effect was heightened by the piercing shrieks of the women and the fierce yells of the warriors. Now and then Duncan caught a glimpse of a light form cleaving the air in some desperate bound, and he rather hoped than believed that the captive yet retained the command of his astonishing powers of activity.

Suddenly the multitude rolled backward and approached the spot where he himself stood. The heavy body in the rear pressed upon the women and children in front and bore them to the earth. The stranger reappeared in the confusion. Human power could not, however, much longer endure so severe a trial. Of this the captive seemed conscious. Profiting by the momentary opening, he darted from among the warriors and made a desperate and what seemed to Duncan a final effort to gain the wood. As if aware that no danger was to be feared from the young soldier, the fugitive nearly brushed his person in his flight. A tall and powerful Huron pressed close upon his heels and with an uplifted arm menaced a fatal blow. Duncan thrust forth a foot, and the shock precipitated the eager savage headlong, many feet in advance of his intended victim. Thought itself is not quicker than was the motion with which the latter profited by the advantage. He turned, gleamed like a meteor again before the eyes of Duncan, and at the next moment leaned against a small painted post, which stood before the door of the principal lodge.

Duncan left the place without delay. He followed the crowd, which drew near the lodges, gloomy and sullen, like any other multitude that had been disappointed in an execution. Curiosity, or perhaps a better feeling, induced him to approach the stranger. He found him standing with one arm cast about the pro-



tecting post and breathing thick and hard after his exertions but disdainingly to permit a single sign of suffering to escape. He was now protected by sacred custom until the tribe in council had deliberated and determined on his fate. It was not difficult, however, to foretell the result, if any prophecy could be drawn from the feelings of those who crowded the place.

There was no term of abuse known to the Huron vocabulary that the disappointed women did not lavishly expend on the successful stranger. They flouted at his efforts and told him that his feet were better than his hands; and that he merited wings, while he knew not the use of an arrow or a knife. To all this the captive made no reply, but was content to preserve an attitude in which dignity was blended with disdain.

His head was immovable; nor did he betray the slightest consciousness that any were present, except when his haughty eye rolled towards the dusky forms of the warriors, who stalked in the background, silent and sullen observers of the scene.

When the captive turned toward the light, Duncan gasped as he recognized his friend Uncas.

Breathless with amazement and heavily oppressed with the critical situation of his friend, Heyward saw a warrior force his way into the exasperated crowd. Motioning the women and children aside with a stern gesture, he took Uncas by the arm and led him towards the door of the council lodge. Thither all the chiefs

and most of the distinguished warriors followed. Among them the anxious Heyward found means to enter without attracting any dangerous attention to himself.

In the very center of the lodge, immediately under an opening that admitted the twinkling light of one or two stars, stood Uncas, calm, elevated, and collected. His high and haughty carriage was not lost on his captors, who often bent their looks on his person with eyes which, while they lost none of their inflexibility of purpose, plainly betrayed their admiration of the stranger's daring.

The case was different with the individual whom Duncan had observed to stand forth with Uncas previously to the desperate trial of speed. Instead of joining in the chase, he had remained throughout its turbulent uproar like a cringing statue, expressive of shame and disgrace. Though not a hand had been extended to greet him, nor yet an eye had condescended to watch his movements, he had also entered the lodge as though impelled by fate.

Heyward profited by the first opportunity to gaze in his face, secretly afraid he might find the features of another acquaintance; but they proved to be those of a stranger and, what was still more strange, of one who bore all the distinctive marks of a Huron warrior. Instead of mingling with his tribe, however, he sat apart.

“Delaware,” said a chief of the tribe to Uncas, “you have proved yourself a man. I would give you food, but he who eats with a Huron should become his friend. Rest in peace till the morning sun, when our last words shall be spoken. Two of my young men are in pursuit of your companion. When they get back, then will our wise men say to you ‘live’ or ‘die.’”

“Has a Huron no ears?” scornfully exclaimed Uncas. “Twice since he has been your prisoner, has the Delaware heard a gun that he knows. Your young men will never come back!”

A short and sullen pause succeeded this bold assertion. Duncan, who understood the Mohican to allude to the fatal rifle of the scout, bent forward in earnest observation of the effect it might produce on the conquerors; but the chief was content with simply retorting, “If the Mohicans are so skilful, why is one of their bravest warriors here?”

“He followed in the steps of that flying coward, and fell into a trap.”

As Uncas thus replied, he pointed with his finger towards the solitary Huron, but without deigning to bestow any other notice on so unworthy an object. The words of the answer and the air of the speaker produced a strong sensation among his auditors. Every eye rolled sullenly towards the individual indicated by the simple gesture, and a low threatening murmur passed through the crowd.



In the meantime the more aged chiefs in the center communed with each other in short and broken sentences. Again a long and deeply solemn pause took place. It was known, by all present, to be the grave forerunner of a weighty and important judgment.

The silence was finally broken by an aged warrior. He arose from the earth and, moving past the immovable form of Uncas, placed himself in a dignified attitude before the cowardly Huron.

“Reed-that-bends,” he said, addressing the young culprit by name and in his proper language, “though the Great Spirit has made you pleasant to the eyes, it would have been better that you had not been born. Your tongue is loud in the village, but in battle it is still. The enemy know the shape of your back, but they have never seen the color of your eyes. Three times have they called on you to come, and as often did you forget to answer. Your name will never be mentioned again in your tribe—it is already forgotten.”

As the chief slowly uttered these words, pausing impressively between each sentence, the culprit raised his face, in deference to the other's rank and years. Shame, horror, and pride struggled in its lineaments. He arose to his feet and baring his bosom looked steadily on the keen, glittering knife that was already upheld by his inexorable judge. As the weapon passed slowly into his heart he even smiled, as if in joy at having found death less dreadful than he had antici-

pated, and fell heavily on his face, at the feet of the rigid and unyielding form of Uncas.

A squaw gave a loud and plaintive yell, dashed the torch to the earth, and buried everything in darkness. The whole shuddering group of spectators glided from the lodge like troubled spirits, and Duncan thought that he and the yet throbbing body of the victim of an Indian judgment had now become its only tenants.

## CHAPTER 18

A single moment served to convince the youth that he was mistaken. A hand was laid with a powerful pressure on his arm, and the low voice of Uncas muttered in his ear, "The Hurons are dogs. The sight of a coward's blood can never make a warrior tremble. The 'Gray Head' and Chingachgook are safe, and the rifle of Hawkeye is not asleep. Go—Uncas and you must pretend to be strangers. It is enough."

Heyward would gladly have heard more, but a gentle push from his friend urged him towards the door and warned him of the danger that might attend the discovery of their conversation. Slowly and reluctantly he quitted the place and mingled with the throng that hovered near. The dying fires in the clearing cast a dim and uncertain light on the dusky figures that were silently stalking to and fro. Occasionally a bright gleam glanced into the lodge and exhibited the figure of Uncas still maintaining its upright attitude near the dead body of the Huron.

A knot of warriors soon entered the place again and bore the body into the adjacent woods. After this scene Duncan wandered among the lodges, unquestioned and unnoticed, endeavoring to find some trace



of her in whose behalf he incurred the risk he ran. In the present temper of the tribe it would have been easy to have fled and rejoined his companions, had such a wish crossed his mind. But in addition to the never-ceasing anxiety on account of Alice a fresher, though feebler interest in the fate of Uncas assisted to chain him to the spot.

He continued, therefore, to stray from hut to hut, looking into each only to encounter additional disappointment, until he had made the entire circuit of the village. Abandoning a species of inquiry that proved so fruitless, he retraced his steps to the council lodge, resolved to seek and question David in order to put an end to his doubts.

On reaching the building which had proved alike the seat of judgment and the place of execution, the young man found that the excitement had already subsided. The warriors had reassembled and were now calmly smoking while they conversed gravely on the chief incidents of their recent expedition to the head of the Horican.

Duncan walked into the lodge, and took his seat with dignity. A hasty but searching glance sufficed to tell him that, though Uncas still remained where he had left him, David had not reappeared. An armed warrior leaned against the post that formed one side of the narrow doorway.

Duncan had not long occupied the seat wisely taken a little in the shade, when another of the elder war-

riors, who spoke the French language, addressed him: "An evil spirit lives in the wife of one of my young men. Can the cunning stranger frighten him away?"

Heyward possessed some knowledge of the "medicine" practised among the Indians in the cases of such supposed ailments. He saw at a glance that the circumstance might possibly be improved to further his own end. Aware of the necessity of preserving the dignity of his imaginary character, however, he repressed his feelings and answered with suitable mystery, "Spirits differ; some yield to the power of wisdom, while others are too strong."

"My brother is a great medicine man," said the cunning savage; "he will try?"

A gesture of agreement was Duncan's answer. The Huron was content with the assurance and resuming his pipe awaited the proper moment to move. The impatient Heyward, inwardly cursing the cold customs of the savages, which required such sacrifices to appearance, had to assume an air of indifference equal to that maintained by the chief, who was, in truth, the father of the afflicted woman. The minutes lingered and the delay had seemed an hour to Duncan when a warrior of powerful frame darkened the door. Stalking silently among the attentive group, he seated himself on one end of the low pile of brush which held Duncan. The latter cast an impatient look at his neighbor and felt his flesh creep with uncontrol-

lable horror when he found himself in actual contact with Magua.

The sudden return of this artful and dreaded chief caused a delay in the departure of the Huron. Several pipes that had been extinguished were lighted again, while the newcomer, without speaking a word, drew his tomahawk from his girdle. Filling the bowl on its head he began to inhale the vapors of the tobacco weed through the hollow handle with as much indifference as if he had not been absent two weary days on a long and toilsome hunt. Ten minutes passed in this manner, and the warriors were fairly enveloped in a cloud of white smoke before any of them spoke.

“Welcome!” one at length uttered. “Has my friend found the moose?”

“The young men stagger under their burdens,” returned Magua.

One of the chiefs declared, “The Delawares have been like bears after the honey-pots prowling around my village. But who has ever found a Huron asleep? We caught one.”

Magua’s brow was black as he asked, “Did my young men take his scalp?”

“His legs were good, though his arm is better for the hoe than the tomahawk,” returned the other, pointing to the immovable form of Uncas.

Instead of manifesting any womanish curiosity to feast his eyes with the sight of a captive from a people



he had so much reason to hate, Magua continued to smoke thoughtfully. Although secretly amazed at the facts communicated by the speech of the chief, he permitted himself to ask no questions, reserving his inquiries for a more suitable moment. It was only after a sufficient interval that he shook the ashes from his pipe, replaced the tomahawk, tightened his girdle, and arose, casting for the first time a glance in the direction of the prisoner, who stood a little behind him.

The wary Uncas caught a glimpse of the movement, and as he turned suddenly to the light, their looks met. Nearly a minute these two bold and untamed spirits stood regarding each other steadily in the eye, neither quailing in the least before the fierce gaze he encountered. The form of Uncas dilated, and his nostrils opened like those of a tiger at bay, but his posture was rigid and unyielding. The countenance of Magua gradually lost its character of defiance in an expression of ferocious joy. Heaving a breath from the very bottom of his chest, he pronounced aloud Uncas's much feared name.

“Le Cerf Agile!”

Each warrior sprang upon his feet at the utterance of the well known title, and there was a short period during which the calm of the natives was completely conquered by surprise. The hated and yet respected name was repeated as by one voice carrying the sound even beyond the limits of the lodge. Each one seated himself, as though ashamed of his lack of calm; but

it was many minutes before eyes ceased to roll towards the captive in curious examination of a warrior who had so often proved his prowess on the best and proudest of their nation. Uncas enjoyed his victory, but was content with merely exhibiting his triumph by a quiet smile.

Magua caught the expression. Raising his arm, he shook it at the captive, the light silver ornaments attached to his bracelet rattling with the trembling agitation of the limb, as in a tone of vengeance he exclaimed in English, "Mohican, you die!"

"The healing waters will never bring the dead Hurons to life," returned Uncas; "the tumbling river washes their bones; their men are squaws. Go! Call together the Huron dogs, that they may look upon a warrior. My nostrils are offended; they scent the blood of a coward."

The latter reference struck deep. Magua instantly profited by his advantage. Dropping the light robe of skin from his shoulder, he stretched forth his arm, and commenced a burst of his dangerous and artful eloquence.

He described the events that had gone before and reminded his listeners of the Huron dead.

"A stain on the name of a Huron," he concluded, "can only be hid by blood that comes from the veins of an Indian. Let this Delaware die."

The effect of such a speech, delivered in the nervous language and with the emphatic manner of a

Huron orator, can scarcely be mistaken. As Magua ended, a warrior arose and uttered the yell of a demon. His polished little axe was seen glancing in the torch-light as he whirled it above his head. The motion and the cry were too sudden for words to interrupt his bloody intention. It appeared as if a bright gleam shot from his hand, which was crossed at the same moment by a dark and powerful line. The former was the tomahawk in its passage; the latter the arm that Magua darted forward to divert its aim. The quick and ready motion of the chief was not entirely too late. The keen weapon cut the war-plume from the scalping-tuft of Uncas and passed through the frail wall of the lodge, as though it had been hurled from some formidable engine.

Duncan saw the threatening action and sprang to his feet, with a heart which leaped into his throat. A glance told him that the blow had failed, and terror changed to admiration. Uncas stood still, looking his enemy in the eye with features that seemed superior to emotion. Marble could not be colder, calmer, or steadier than the countenance he put upon this sudden and vindictive attack. Then, as if pitying a want of skill which had proved so fortunate to himself, he smiled and muttered a few words of contempt in his own tongue.

“No!” said Magua, after satisfying himself of the safety of the captive. “The sun must shine on his shame; the squaws must see his flesh tremble, or our



revenge will be like the play of boys. Go! Take him where there is silence. Let us see if a Delaware can sleep at night and in the morning die."

The young men whose duty it was to guard the prisoner instantly passed their bonds across his arms and led him from the lodge amid a profound and ominous silence. It was only as the figure of Uncas stood in the opening of the door that his firm step hesitated. There he turned and in the sweeping and haughty glance that he threw around the circle of his enemies, Duncan caught a look which showed he was not entirely deserted by hope.

Magua was content with his success and left. Heyward felt sensibly relieved by the absence of so dangerous and so subtle a foe. The excitement produced by the speech gradually subsided. The warriors resumed their seats, and clouds of smoke once more filled the lodge. For nearly half an hour not a syllable was uttered or scarcely a look cast aside.

When the chief who had asked the aid of Duncan finished his pipe, he made a final and successful movement towards departing. A motion of a finger was the intimation he gave the supposed physician to follow. Passing through the clouds of smoke, Duncan was glad to be able to breathe the pure air of a cool and refreshing summer evening.

Instead of pursuing his way among those lodges where Heyward had already made his unsuccessful search, his companion turned aside and proceeded

directly towards the base of an adjacent mountain, which overhung the temporary village.

Suddenly a dark and mysterious-looking being arose unexpectedly in their path.

The Indian paused, as if doubtful whether to proceed, and permitted his companion to approach his side. A large black ball, which at first seemed stationary, now began to move in a strange manner. Then Duncan realized the animal was a bear. Though it growled loudly and fiercely, and there were instants when its glistening eye-balls might be seen, it gave no other indications of hostility. The Huron, at least, seemed assured that the intentions of this intruder were peaceable, for after giving it an attentive examination, he quietly pursued his course.

Duncan, who knew that the animal was often domesticated among the Indians, followed the example of his companion. They passed it unmolested. Though obliged to come nearly in contact with the monster, the Huron, who had at first so warily determined the character of his strange visitor, was now content with proceeding without wasting a moment in further examination; but Heyward was unable to prevent his eyes from looking backward in watchfulness. His uneasiness was not diminished when he perceived the beast rolling along their path and following their footsteps. He would have spoken, but the Indian at that moment shoved aside a door of bark and entered a cavern in the mountain.

Profiting by so easy a method of retreat, Duncan stepped after him and was gladly closing the slight cover to the opening, when he felt it drawn from his hand by the beast, whose shaggy form immediately darkened the passage. They were now in a straight and long gallery in a chasm of the rocks where retreat without encountering the animal was impossible. Making the best of the circumstances, the young man pressed forward, keeping as close as possible to his conductor. The bear growled frequently at his heels, and once or twice its enormous paws were laid on his person as if to prevent his further passage into the den.

How long the nerves of Heyward would have sustained him in this extraordinary situation it might be difficult to decide; happily, he soon found relief. A glimmer of light had constantly been in their front, and they now arrived at the place from where it proceeded.

Here the sick woman, who was believed to be the victim of supernatural power, had been transported also, under an impression that her tormentor would find more difficulty in making his assaults through walls of stone than through the leafy coverings of the lodges. The apartment into which Duncan and his guide first entered had been exclusively devoted to her accommodation. The latter approached her bedside, which was surrounded by women. In the center of the group Heyward was surprised to find his missing friend David.



A single look was sufficient to tell Duncan that the invalid was far beyond his powers of healing. She lay in a sort of paralysis, indifferent to the objects which crowded before her sight and happily unconscious of suffering.

Gamut, who had stood prepared to pour forth his spirit in song when the visitors entered, commenced a hymn. As the melody died away Duncan started aside at hearing them repeated behind him in a voice half human. Looking around, he beheld the shaggy bear seated on end in a shadow of the cavern where, while its restless body swung in the uneasy manner of the animal, it repeated in a sort of low growl, a sound which bore some slight resemblance to the melody of the singer.

The effect of so strange an echo on David may better be imagined than described. His eyes opened as if he doubted their truth; and his voice became instantly still. Hastily he exclaimed aloud, "She expects you, and is at hand;" and quickly left the cavern.

## CHAPTER 19

There was a strange blending of the ridiculous and the solemn in this scene. The beast still continued its rolling movements, though its ludicrous attempt to imitate the melody of David ceased the instant the latter abandoned the field. The words of Gamut were, as has been seen, in English. To Duncan they seemed to hold some hidden meaning, though nothing present assisted him in discovering it.

The chief advanced to the bedside of the invalid and beckoned away the whole group of female attendants that had clustered there to witness the skill of the stranger. Then, pointing towards his insensible daughter, he said, "Now let my brother show his power."

Thus called upon to be a medicine man Heyward was fearful that the smallest delay might prove dangerous. Endeavoring to collect his ideas, he prepared to perform some charms but his efforts were interrupted by a fierce growl from the bear. Three several times did he renew his efforts to proceed, and as often was he met by the same unaccountable opposition, each interruption seeming more savage and threatening than the preceding.

"The cunning ones are jealous," said the Huron;

“I go. Brother, the woman is the wife of one of my bravest young men; deal justly by her. Peace!” he added, beckoning to the discontented beast to be quiet. “I go.”

The chief was as good as his word, and Duncan now found himself alone in that wild and desolate abode with the helpless invalid and the fierce and dangerous brute. The latter listened to the movements of the Indian with that air of wisdom that a bear is known to possess, until another echo announced that he had also left the cavern. Then it turned and came waddling up to Duncan, before whom it seated itself in its natural attitude, erect like a man. The youth looked anxiously about him for some weapon with which he might make a resistance against the attack he now seriously expected.

It seemed, however, as if the purpose of the animal had suddenly changed. Instead of continuing its discontented growls or showing any further signs of anger, the bear shook violently, as if agitated by some strange internal convulsion. The huge and unwieldy talons pawed stupidly about the grinning muzzle, and while Heyward kept his eyes riveted on its movements with zealous watchfulness, the grim head fell on one side. In its place appeared the honest, sturdy countenance of Hawkeye who was indulging from the bottom of his soul in his own peculiar expression of merriment.

“Hist!” said the wary woodsman, interrupting Hey-









ward's exclamation of surprise. "The scoundrels are about the place, and any sounds that are not natural to witchcraft would bring them back upon us in a body."

"Tell me the meaning of this masquerade, and why you have attempted so desperate an adventure."

"Ah! Reason and calculation are often outdone by accident," returned the scout. "But as a story should always commence at the beginning, I will tell you the whole in order. After we parted I placed Munro and Chingachgook in an old beaver lodge, where they are safer from the Hurons than they would be in the garrison of Edward. After this Uncas and I pushed for the other encampment, as was agreed. Have you seen the lad?"

"To my great grief! He is captive and condemned to die at the rising of the sun."

"I had misgivings that such would be his fate," resumed the scout in a less confident and joyous tone. But soon regaining his naturally firm voice, he continued. "His bad fortune is the true reason of my being here, for it would never do to abandon such a boy to the Hurons. A rare time the knaves would have of it could they tie 'The Bounding Elk' and 'The Long Rifle,' as they call me, to the same stake!"

"Hurry!" said impatient Heyward. "We know not at what moment the Hurons may return."

"No fear of them. A medicine man must have his time. We are safe from interruption for two hours.



Well, Uncas and I fell in with a return party of the Hurons; the lad was a little reckless for a scout. One of the Hurons proved a coward and in fleeing led him into an ambush."

"And dearly has he paid for the weakness!"

The scout significantly passed his hand across his own throat and nodded, as if he said, "I understand your meaning." After this he continued.

"After the loss of the boy I turned upon the Hurons, as you may judge. There have been battles between one or two of their patrols and me; but that is neither here nor there. So, after I had shot the imps, I got in pretty near to the lodges without further commotion. Then what should luck do in my favor but lead me to the very spot where one of the most famous medicine men was dressing in a bear costume."

"And admirably did you enact the character. The animal itself might have been shamed by the representation."

"Lord, major," returned the flattered woodsman, "I should be but a poor scholar for one who has studied so long in the wilderness, if I did not know how to set forth the movements and nature of such a beast. Had it been now a wildcat or even a full-sized panther, I would have enacted a performance for you worth seeing. But it is no marvelous feat to exhibit the feats of so dull a beast, though, for that matter too, a bear may be overacted. But all our work is yet before us; where is Alice?"

“Heaven knows; I have examined every lodge in the village without discovering the slightest trace of her presence in the tribe.”

“You heard what the singer said, as he left us,— ‘She is at hand, and expects you’?”

“I have been forced to believe he alluded to this unhappy woman.”

“The simpleton was frightened, and blundered through his message; but he had a deeper meaning. Here are walls enough to separate the whole settlement. A bear ought to climb; therefore will I take a look about them.”

The scout clambered up the partition, imitating, as he went, the clumsy motions of the beast he represented. The instant the summit was gained he made a gesture for silence and slid down with the utmost haste.

“She is here,” he whispered, “and by that door you will find her. I would have spoken a word of comfort to the afflicted soul; but the sight of a bear might upset her. Though for that matter, major, you are not most inviting either in your paint.”

Duncan, who had already sprung eagerly forward, drew instantly back on hearing these discouraging words.

“Am I, then, so very revolting?” he demanded, with an air of chagrin.

“You might not startle a wolf, but I have seen the time when you had a better-favored look. See,” he

added, pointing to a place where the water trickled from a rock, forming a little crystal spring before it came through the adjacent crevices; "you may easily get rid of the paint and when you come back, I will try my hand at a new painting."

He was still speaking when Duncan availed himself of the water. In a moment every frightful or offensive mark was obliterated, and the youth emerged again in the appearance with which he had been gifted by nature. He took a hasty leave of his companion and disappeared through the indicated passage.

Duncan had no other guide than a distant glimmering light, but its aid enabled him to enter another apartment of the cavern which had been solely appropriated to the safe-keeping of so important a prisoner as a daughter of the commander of William Henry. It was profusely strewed with the plunder of that unlucky fortress. In the midst of this confusion he found Alice, pale, anxious, and terrified, but lovely. David had prepared her for such a visit.

"Duncan!" she exclaimed in a voice that seemed to tremble at the sounds created by itself.

"Alice," he answered, leaping carelessly among trunks, boxes, arms, and furniture, until he stood at her side.

"I knew that you would never desert me," she said looking up with a momentary glow on her otherwise dejected countenance.



It took but a moment to explain what had happened, but as Duncan paused, he felt a light tap on his shoulder. Starting to his feet, he turned and saw the dark form and malignant visage of Magua. The deep guttural laugh of the savage sounded to Duncan, at such a moment, like the hellish taunt of a demon.

“What is your purpose?” said Alice, meekly folding her arms and struggling to conceal an agony of fear for Heyward, in the usual cold and distant manner with which she received the visits of her captor.

The exulting Indian had resumed his stern expression, though he drew warily back before the menacing glance of the young man’s fiery eye. He regarded both his captives for a moment with a steady look. Then stepping aside, he dropped a log of wood across a door different from that by which Duncan had entered. The latter now understood the manner of his surprise. But Magua planned no immediate violence. His first measures were very evidently taken to secure his new captive; nor did he even bestow a second glance at the motionless forms in the center of the cavern, until he had completely cut off every hope of retreat through the private outlet he had himself used. When Magua had effected his object, he approached his prisoners and said in English, “The pale-faces trap the cunning beavers; but the redskins know how to take the pale-faces.”

“Huron, do your worst!” exclaimed the excited

Heyward, forgetful that a double stake was involved in his life. "You and your vengeance are alike despised."

"Will the white man speak these words at the stake?" asked Magua.

"Here; singly to your face, or in the presence of your nation."

"Le Renard Subtil is a great chief!" returned the Indian. "He will go and bring his young men to see how bravely a pale-face can laugh at the tortures."

He turned away while speaking and was about to leave the place through the avenue by which Duncan had approached, when a growl caught his ear and caused him to hesitate. The figure of the bear appeared in the door, where it sat, rolling from side to side in its customary restlessness. Magua recognized the costume of a medicine man.

"Fool!" he exclaimed. "Go play with the children and squaws. Leave men to their wisdom."

He once more tried to pass the supposed medicine man. Suddenly the beast extended its arms, or rather legs, and inclosed him in a mighty grasp. Heyward had watched the whole procedure on the part of Hawkeye with breathless interest. At first he relinquished his hold of Alice. Then he caught up a bond, rushed upon Magua and tied him. When the formidable Huron was completely bound, the scout released his hold, and Duncan laid his enemy on his back, utterly helpless.

Throughout the whole of this sudden operation, Magua, though he had struggled violently, had not uttered the slightest exclamation. But when Hawkeye, by way of making an explanation of his conduct, removed the shaggy jaws of the beast, and exposed his own rugged and earnest face, Magua merely exclaimed—

“Hugh!”

“Ay! You’ve found your tongue,” said his undisturbed conquerer. “Now, in order that you shall not use it to our ruin, I must stop your mouth.”

“By what place did the imp enter?” asked the industrious scout, when his work was ended. “Not a soul has passed my way since you left me.”

Duncan pointed out the door by which Magua had come and which now presented too many obstacles to quick retreat.

“Bring on the girl then,” continued his friend; “we must make a push for the woods by the other outlet.”

“’Tis impossible!” said Duncan. “Fear has overcome her, and she is helpless. Alice! Arouse yourself; now is the moment to fly. ’Tis in vain! She hears, but is unable to follow. Go. Save yourself, and leave me to my fate!”

“There, wrap her in these Indian clothes. Conceal her. Now take her in your arms and follow. Leave the rest to me.”

Duncan eagerly obeyed. As the other finished speaking, he took the light person of Alice in his arms, and



followed on the footsteps of the scout. They found the sick woman as they had left her, still alone, and passed swiftly on. As they approached the little door a murmur of voices announced that the friends and relatives of the invalid were gathered about the place, patiently awaiting a summons to re-enter.

“If I open my lips to speak,” Hawkeye whispered, “my English will tell them that an enemy is among them. You must give ’em your French, major. Say that we have shut the evil spirit in the cave, and are taking the woman to the woods in order to find strengthening roots.”

The door opened a little, as if one was listening to the proceedings within. A fierce growl repelled the eavesdropper, and then the scout boldly threw open the covering and left the place, enacting the character of the bear as he proceeded. Duncan kept close at his heels, and soon found himself in the center of a cluster of twenty anxious relatives and friends.

The crowd fell back a little and permitted the father and the husband of the woman to approach.

“Have you driven away the evil spirit?” demanded the former. “What have you in your arms?”

“Your child,” returned Duncan gravely; “the disease has gone out of her. It is shut up in the rocks. I take the woman to a distance, where I will strengthen her against any further attacks. She will be in the wigwam of the young man when the sun comes again.”

When the father had translated the meaning of

the stranger's words into the Huron language, a suppressed murmur of satisfaction went around. The chief himself waved his hand for Duncan to proceed, saying aloud in a firm voice and with a lofty manner, "Go; I am a man, and I will enter the rock and fight the wicked one."

Heyward had gladly obeyed and was already past the little group when these startling words arrested him.

"Are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Are you cruel? You will meet the disease and it will enter you. No, wait outside, and if the spirit appears beat him down with clubs. He is cunning, and will bury himself in the mountain, when he sees how many are ready to fight him."

This singular warning had the desired effect. Instead of entering the cavern, the father and husband drew their tomahawks and posted themselves in readiness to deal their vengeance on the imaginary tormentor of their sick relative, while the women and children broke branches from the bushes, with a similar intention. At this favorable moment the little band disappeared.

Hawkeye well knew the value of time in the present emergency. Taking the path, therefore, that was most likely to avoid observation, he rather skirted than entered the village.

Alice revived under the renovating influence of the open air.

"Now let me make an effort to walk," she said,

when they had entered the forest. "I am indeed restored."

"Nay, Alice, you are yet too weak."

When they were at a suitable distance from the lodges, Hawkeye made a halt.

"This path will lead you to the brook," he said; "follow its northern bank until you come to a fall. Mount the hill on your right, and you will see the fires of the other people. There you must go and demand protection. If they are true Delawares, you will be safe. A distant flight with Alice, just now, is impossible. The Hurons would follow up our trail, take our scalps before we had got a dozen miles. Go, and Providence be with you."

"And you!" demanded Heyward in surprise. "Surely we are not parting here?"

"The Hurons hold the pride of the Delawares, the last of the high blood of the Mohicans," returned the scout; "I go to see what can be done in his favor. If Uncas is to be led to the stake, the Indians shall see also how Hawkeye can die."

Duncan released his hold on the arm of the scout, who turned and steadily retraced his steps towards the lodges. After pausing a moment to gaze at his retiring form, Heyward and Alice took their way together towards the distant village of the Delawares.



## CHAPTER 20

Hawkeye fully understood all the difficulties and dangers he was about to incur. In his return to the camp he intently thought of means to counteract watchfulness and suspicion on the part of his enemies.

In one of the lodges he found David Gamut, who was at first startled by Hawkeye's animal costume.

"Lead me to Uncas," directed the scout, after explaining his plan.

The lodge in which Uncas was confined was in the very center of the village, and in a situation more difficult than any other to approach or leave without observation. But it was not the policy of Hawkeye to affect the least concealment. Presuming on his disguise he took the most plain and direct route to the place. Most of the warriors had retired to their lodges for the night. Four or five only lingered about the door of the prison of Uncas, wary but close observers of the manner of their captive. At the sight of Gamut, accompanied by one in the well known masquerade of a medicine man, they readily made way for them both. Still they betrayed no intention to depart. On the other hand, they were evidently

disposed to remain bound to the place by an additional interest in the magic that they of course expected from such a visit.

From the total inability of Hawkeye to address the Hurons in their own language, he was compelled to trust the conversation entirely to David.

“Do you wish,” asked David, “to see Le Cerf Agile weep before the Hurons, at the stake?”

The exclamation “Hugh!” delivered in a strong tone of assent, announced the gratification the savages would receive in witnessing such an exhibition of weakness in an enemy so long hated and so much feared.

“Then let them step aside, and the medicine man will perform this magic.”

The warriors drew back a little from the entrance and motioned to the supposed medicine man to enter. But the bear, instead of obeying, maintained the seat it had taken and growled.

“The medicine man is afraid that his breath will blow upon you and take away your courage too,” continued David. “You must stand further off.”

The Hurons fell back in a body, taking a position where they were out of earshot, though at the same time they could see the entrance to the lodge. Then the scout left his position, and slowly entered the place. It was silent and gloomy, being tenanted solely by the captive.

Uncas occupied a distant corner in a reclining at-

titude, being rigidly bound, both hands and feet, by strong and painful ties. When the frightful object first presented itself to the young Mohican, he did not bestow a single glance on the animal. The scout, who had left David at the door, thought it wise to preserve his disguise until assured of their privacy.

Then the scout gave a well known signal.

“Hawkeye!”

“Cut his bands,” said Hawkeye to David, who just then approached them.

The singer did as he was ordered, and Uncas found his limbs released. At the same moment the scout arose to his feet without disguise.

“The Hurons are outside,” he said; “let us be ready.”

“We will go,” said Uncas.

“Where?”

“To the Delawares. They are the children of my grandfathers.”

“Ay, lad,” said the scout; “the same blood runs in your veins, I believe; but time and distance have a little changed its color. What shall we do with the Hurons at the door? They count six, and this singer is as good as nothing. Wait, I have a plan. Put on the skin; I doubt not you can play the bear nearly as well as I.”

Uncas silently put on the covering of the beast.

“Now, friend,” said Hawkeye, addressing David, “an exchange of garments will be a great convenience



to you, inasmuch as you are but little accustomed to the makeshifts of the wilderness. Here, take my hunting shirt and cap, and give me your blanket and hat. You must trust me with the book and spectacles too; if we ever meet again in better times, you shall have all back again with many thanks into the bargain."

David parted with the several articles named with readiness. Hawkeye was not long in putting on his borrowed garments. When his restless eyes were hid behind the glasses, he might readily have passed for the singer by starlight. As soon as these changes were made, the scout turned to David and gave him his parting instructions.

"Are you much given to cowardice?" he bluntly asked.

"My pursuits are peaceful, but I am not a coward," returned David.

"Your chief danger will be at the moment when the savages find out that they have been deceived. If you are not then knocked in the head, since you are considered insane, you will be protected. If you stay, it must be to sit down here in the shadow and take the part of Uncas, until such times as the cunning of the Indians discover the trick. Then, as I have already said, your time of trial will come. So choose for yourself—to make a rush or stay here."

"Even so," said David firmly; "I will abide in the place of Uncas. Bravely and generously has he bat-

bled in my behalf; and this and more will I dare in his service."

"You have spoken like a man. Hold your head down and draw in your legs. Keep silent as long as you can. It would be wise, when you do speak, to break out suddenly in one of your songs, which will serve to remind the Indians that you are not altogether as responsible as men should be. If, however, they take your scalp, as I trust and believe they will not, Uncas and I will not forget the deed but revenge it as becomes true warriors and trusty friends."

So saying, the scout returned and shook David cordially by the hand. After this act of friendship he immediately left the lodge, attended by the new representative of the beast.

The instant Hawkeye found himself under the observation of the Hurons, he drew up his tall form in the rigid manner of David, threw out his arm in the act of keeping time and began what he intended for an imitation of his singing.

They had to pass near the dark group of the savages, and the voice of the scout grew louder as they drew nearer. When at the nearest point, a Huron thrust out an arm and stopped the supposed singing-master.

"The Delaware dog!" he said, leaning forward, and peering through the dim light to catch the expression of the other's features. "Is he afraid? Will the Hurons hear his groans?"

A growl so exceedingly fierce and natural proceeded from the beast that the young Indian released his hold and started aside, as if to assure himself that it was not a real bear and no counterfeit. Hawkeye, who feared his voice would betray him to his subtle enemies, gladly profited by the interruption to break out anew in loud song. The little knot of Indians drew back in a body and allowed the "medicine man" and his inspired assistant to proceed.

The adventurers had got clear of the village and were now swiftly approaching the shelter of the woods, when a loud and long cry arose from the lodge where Uncas had been confined. The Mohican started on his feet, cast off his skin, and stepped forth in his own beautiful proportions. Hawkeye tapped him lightly on the shoulder and glided ahead.

"Now let the devils strike our scent!" said the scout, tearing two rifles from beneath a bush and flourishing "Killdeer" as he handed Uncas his weapon. "Two, at least, will find it to their deaths."

Then they dashed forward and were soon buried in the somber darkness of the forest.



## CHAPTER 21

When the Hurons discovered the trick, they vowed vengeance but spared David, whose supposed insanity they continued to respect. Soon the angry crowd was joined by Magua, who had just been freed by the group at the cave. Magua proposed to take a group of Hurons with him to the neighboring tribe. He hoped to regain Cora from the Delawares, who were, temporarily, Huron allies, though related to the Mohicans themselves. Accordingly the next morning the Hurons approached the Delaware camp.

Their reception was grave, silent, and wary.

"The wise Huron is welcome," said the Delaware chief.

"He is come," repeated Magua, bending his head with the dignity of an Eastern prince.

The chief extended his arm, and taking the other by the wrist, they once more exchanged friendly salutations. Then the Delaware invited his guest to enter his own lodge.

During the short meal that followed, the conversation was related entirely to the events of the hunt in which Magua had so lately been engaged.

Then Magua, referring to Cora, who had been

lodged with the Delawares, asked, "Does my prisoner give trouble to you?"

"She is welcome."

"The path between the Hurons and the Delawares is short and it is open. Let her be sent to my squaws, if she gives trouble."

"She is welcome," returned the chief of the latter nation, still more emphatically.

The baffled Magua continued silent several minutes, apparently indifferent, however, to the repulse he had received in his open effort to gain possession of Cora.

"Have there been strangers about your lodges?"

"Yes," admitted the chief.

"Did you beat out the dogs?" asked Magua.

"It would not do. The stranger is always welcome in our lodges."

"The stranger, but not the spy."

"Would the pale-faces send their women as spies?"

"There is among you a pale-face who has slain many of your young men—La Longue Carabine!" said Magua.

The Delaware warriors started at the well-known name, betraying by their amazement that they now learnt, for the first time, one so famous was in their power.

"What do you mean?" demanded the chief.

"A Huron never lies!" returned Magua coldly,

leaning his head against the side of the lodge and drawing his slight robe across his tawny breast. "Let the Delawares count these strangers; they will find one whose skin is neither red nor pale."

A long pause followed. The chief consulted apart with his companions, and messengers were despatched to collect certain others of the most distinguished men of the tribe.

As warrior after warrior dropped in, they were each made acquainted, in turn, with the important news that Magua had just communicated. The air of surprise and the usual low, deep, guttural exclamation were common to them all.

At length a low murmur was heard, and the whole nation arose by a common impulse. Three men, issuing from it, slowly approached the place of consultation. They were all aged, but one in the center who leaned on his companions for support was more than 100 years old.

As soon as the first hum of emotion and pleasure, which the sudden appearance of this individual created, had a little subsided, the name of "Tamenund" was whispered from mouth to mouth. Magua had often heard the fame of this wise and just Delaware.

He passed the observant and silent Magua without notice, and seated himself in the center of his nation, with the dignity of a monarch and the air of a father.

After a short delay a few of the young men, to



whom instructions had been whispered by one of the aged attendants of Tamenund, arose and left the crowd. In a few minutes they reappeared, escorting, towards the seat of judgment, the individuals who had caused all these solemn preparations. The crowd opened in a lane; and when the party had reentered, it closed in again, forming a large and dense belt of human bodies, arranged in an open circle.







## CHAPTER 22

Cora stood foremost among the prisoners, entwining her arms in those of Alice. Close at their side stood Heyward. Hawkeye had placed himself a little in the rear.

When perfect silence was again restored, one of the two aged chiefs who sat at the side of Tamenund arose and demanded aloud in very intelligible English, "Which of my prisoners is La Longue Carabine?"

Neither Duncan nor the scout answered. The former, however, glanced around the dark and silent assembly and recoiled when he saw the malignant visage of Magua. He saw at once that this wily savage had some secret hand in their present plight and determined to throw every possible impediment in the way of the execution of his sinister plans. He had witnessed one instance of the punishments of the Indians and now dreaded that his companion was to be selected for a second. In this dilemma, with little or no time for reflection, he suddenly determined to cloak his invaluable friend at any or every hazard to himself. Before he had time, however, to speak, the question was repeated in a louder voice and with a clearer utterance.

“Give us arms,” the young man haughtily replied, “and place us in yonder woods. Our deeds shall speak for us!”

“This is the warrior whose name has filled our ears!” returned the chief, regarding Heyward with curious interest. “What has brought the white man into the camp of the Delawares?”

“My necessities. I come for food, shelter and friends.”

“It cannot be. The woods are full of game. The head of a warrior needs no other shelter than a sky without clouds; and the Delawares are the enemies and not the friends of the pale-faces.”

Duncan remained silent; but the scout, who had listened attentively to all that passed, now advanced steadily to the front.

“I am La Longue Carabine,” he said.

The eyes of all present, which had hitherto been gravely scanning the person of Duncan, were now turned on the instant toward the upright iron frame of this new pretender to the distinguished name.

“My brother has said that a snake crept into my camp,” said the chief to Magua; “which is he?”

The Huron pointed to the scout.

“Will the wise Delaware believe the barking of a wolf?” exclaimed Duncan, still more confirmed in the evil intentions of his ancient enemy. “A dog never lies, but when was a wolf known to speak the truth?”

The eyes of Magua flashed fire; but, suddenly recollecting the necessity of maintaining his presence of mind, he turned away in silent scorn, well assured that the wisdom of the Indians would not fail to find the real Hawkeye. A Delaware turned to him again and expressed the determination of the chiefs, though in the most considerate language.

“My brother has been called a liar,” he said, “and his friends are angry. They will show that he has spoken the truth. Give my prisoners guns, and let them prove which is the man.”

Weapons were instantly placed in the hands of the friendly opponents, and they were bid to fire over the heads of the seated multitude at an earthen vessel, which lay, by accident, on a stump some fifty yards from the place where they stood.

Heyward smiled to himself at the idea of a competition with the scout, though he determined to persevere in the deception. Raising his rifle with the utmost care and renewing his aim three times, he fired. The bullet cut the wood within a few inches of the vessel. A general exclamation of satisfaction announced that the shot was considered a proof of great skill in the use of the weapon.

Even Hawkeye nodded his head, as if he would say, it was better than he had expected. But instead of showing any intention to contend with the successful marksman, he stood leaning on his rifle for more than a minute, like a man who was completely buried



in thought. From this reverie he was, however, awakened by one of the young Indians who had furnished the arms and who now touched his shoulder, saying, "Can the pale-face better it?"

"Yes, Huron!" exclaimed the scout, raising the short rifle in his right hand and shaking it at Magua, with as much apparent ease as if it were a reed. "Yes, Huron, I could strike you now, and no power on earth could prevent the deed! Why should I not? Why!—Because I might draw down evil on tender and innocent heads. If you know such a being as God, thank Him, therefore, in your inward soul; for you have reason."

The flushed countenance, angry eye, and swelling figure of the scout produced a sensation of secret awe in all that heard him. The Delawares held their breath in expectation; but Magua remained immovable and calm.

"Better it," replied the young Delaware at the elbow of the scout.

"Better what, fool!—What!" exclaimed Hawkeye, still flourishing the weapon angrily above his head, though his eye no longer sought the person of Magua.

"If the white man is the warrior he pretends," said the aged chief, "let him strike nearer to the mark."

The scout laughed aloud—then dropping the piece heavily into his extended left hand, he discharged it apparently by the shock, driving the fragments of the

vessel into the air and scattering them on every side. Almost at the same instant the rattling sound of the rifle was heard, as he suffered it to fall contemptuously to the earth.

The first impression of so strange a scene was admiration. Then a low, but increasing murmur, ran through the multitude and finally swelled into sounds that denoted a lively opposition in the sentiments of the spectators. While some openly testified their satisfaction at such skill, by far the larger portion of the tribe were inclined to believe the success of the shot was the result of accident. Heyward was not slow to confirm an opinion that was so favorable to his own pretensions.

“It was chance!” he exclaimed. “None can shoot without an aim!”

“Chance!” echoed the excited woodsman, who was now stubbornly bent on maintaining his identity at every hazard, and on whom the secret hints of Heyward to agree to the deception were entirely lost. “Does yonder lying Huron, too, think it chance? Give him another gun, and place us face to face without cover or dodge and let Providence and our own eyes decide the matter between us!”

“That the Huron is a liar is very evident,” returned Heyward coolly; “you have yourself heard him assert you to be La Longue Carabine.”

It is impossible to say what violent assertion the

stubborn Hawkeye would have next made in his headlong wish to establish his identity, had not the aged Delaware once more interposed.

“Give them the guns.”

This time the scout seized the rifle with eagerness.

“Now let it be proved, in the face of this tribe of Delawares, which is the better man,” cried the scout, tapping the butt of his piece with that finger which had pulled so many fatal triggers. “You see the gourd hanging against yonder tree, major. If you are a marksman let me see you break its shell!”

Duncan noted the object and prepared to renew the trial. The gourd was one of the usual little vessels used by the Indians, and it was suspended from a dead branch of a small pine at the full distance of a hundred yards. Had his life depended on the issue, the aim of Duncan could not have been more deliberate or guarded. He fired; and three or four young Indians, who sprang forward at the report, announced with a shout that the ball was in the tree, a very little on one side of the proper object. The warriors uttered a common ejaculation of pleasure, and then turned their eyes inquiringly on the movements of his rival.

“It may do for the King’s troops!” said Hawkeye, laughing once more in his own silent, heartfelt manner; “but had my gun often turned so much from the true line, many a bloody Huron who has de-







parted to his final account would be acting his deviltries at this very day. I hope the squaw who owns the gourd has more of them in her wigwam, for this will never hold water again!"

The scout had cocked his gun while speaking. As he ended, he threw back a foot and slowly raised the muzzle from the earth. The motion was steady, uniform, and in one direction. When on a perfect level, it remained for a single moment, without tremor or variation, as though both man and rifle were carved in stone. During that stationary instant, it poured forth its contents in a bright, glancing sheet of flame. Again the young Indians bounded forward; but their hurried search and disappointed looks announced that no traces of the bullet were to be seen.

"Go!" said the old chief to the scout in a tone of strong disgust. "Thou art a wolf in the skin of a dog."

"Fools," returned Hawkeye, perfectly undisturbed by the other's manner, "if you would find the bullet of a sharpshooter of these woods, you must look *in* the object and not around it!"

The Indian youths instantly comprehended his meaning. Tearing the gourd from the tree, they held it on high with an exulting shout, displaying a hole in its bottom, which had been cut by the bullet after passing through the usual opening in the center of its upper side. At this unexpected exhibition a loud and vehement expression of pleasure burst from the



mouth of every warrior present. It decided the question, and effectually established Hawkeye in the possession of his dangerous reputation.

Magua was then allowed to speak. Referring to the justice of the Delawares, he demanded his prisoners.

At last, Tamenund declared, "Justice is the law of the great spirit. My children, give the stranger food. Then, Huron, take your own and depart."

The words were barely uttered when four or five of the younger warriors, stepping behind Heyward and the scout, passed bonds dexterously and rapidly around their arms.

Magua cast a look of triumph around the whole assembly before he proceeded to his purpose. Seeing that the men were unable to offer any resistance, he turned his looks on her he valued most. Cora met his gaze with an eye so calm and firm that his resolution wavered. Then he raised Alice from the arms of the warrior against whom she leaned and motioned for the encircling crowd to open. But Cora rushed to the feet of Tamenund and exclaimed aloud, "Just and venerable Delaware, upon your wisdom and power we lean for mercy! Be deaf to that artful and remorseless monster, who poisons your ears with falsehoods to feed his thirst for blood. There is yet one of your own people who has not been brought before you. Before you let the Huron depart in triumph hear him speak."

Observing Tamenund to look about him doubtingly, one of his companions said, "It is a snake—a redskin in the pay of the pale-faces. We keep him for the torture."

"Let him come," returned the sage.

Then Tamenund once more sank into his seat, and a silence so deep prevailed that the leaves, which fluttered in the draft of the light morning air, were distinctly heard rustling in the surrounding forest.

## CHAPTER 23

The silence continued unbroken for many anxious minutes. Then the waving multitude opened and shut again, and Uncas stood in the living circle. He cast a deliberate and observing look on every side of him, meeting the expression of hostility with calmness. But when, last in his haughty scrutiny, the person of Tamenund came under his glance, his eye became fixed, as though all other objects were already forgotten. Then advancing with a slow and noiseless step up the area, he placed himself immediately before the footstool of the sage.

“With what tongue does the prisoner speak?” demanded Tamenund.

“Like his fathers,” Uncas replied; “with the tongue of a Delaware.”

“Delaware!” resumed the sage. “Little are you worthy of your name. He is yours, my children; deal justly by him.”

A cry of vengeance burst at once from the united lips of the nation, a frightful indication of their ruthless intentions.

In the midst of these prolonged and savage yells, a chief proclaimed in a high voice that the captive



was condemned to endure the dreadful trial of torture by fire. Heyward struggled madly with his captors; the anxious eyes of Hawkeye began to look around him with an expression of peculiar earnestness; and Cora again threw herself at the feet of Tamenund.

Throughout these trying moments Uncas had alone preserved his serenity. He looked on the preparations with a steady eye, and when the tormentors came to seize him, he met them with a firm and upright attitude. One among them, if possible more fierce and savage than his fellows, seized the hunting-shirt of the young warrior and at a single effort tore it from his body. Then, with a yell of frantic pleasure he leaped towards his unresisting victim and prepared to lead him to the stake.

At that moment the savage stopped as suddenly as if a supernatural agency had interrupted in behalf of Uncas. The eyeballs of the Delaware seemed to start from their sockets; his mouth opened, and his whole form became frozen in an attitude of amazement. Raising his hand with a slow and regulated motion, he pointed with a finger to the bosom of the captive. His companions crowded about him in wonder, and every eye was, like his own, fastened intently on the figure of a small tortoise, beautifully tattooed on the breast of the prisoner in a bright blue tint. This was the sign permitted only to the highest chieftain of the Delaware tribe.

For a single instant Uncas enjoyed his triumph, smiling calmly on the scene. Then motioning the crowd away with a high and haughty sweep of his arm, he advanced in front of the nation with the air of a king, and spoke in a voice louder than the murmur of admiration that ran through the multitude.

“Men of the Delaware!” he said. “My race upholds the earth! Your feeble tribe stands on my shell!”

“Who are you?” demanded Tamenund, rising.

“Uncas, the son of Chingachgook,” answered the captive modestly, turning from the nation and bending his head in reverence to the other’s character and years.

“The hour of Tamenund is near!” exclaimed the sage. “The day is come, at last, to the night! I thank the Great Spirit that one is here to fill my place at the council-fire. Uncas, the child of Chingachgook, is found! Let the eyes of a dying eagle gaze on the rising sun.”

Uncas permitted his looks to wander over the silent throng that crowded around the elevated seat of Tamenund. He first perceived Hawkeye in his bonds. Stepping eagerly from his stand, he made way for himself to the side of his friend. Cutting his bonds with a quick and angry stroke of his own knife, he motioned to the crowd to divide. The Indians silently obeyed, and once more they stood ranged in their circle, as before his appearance among them. Uncas

took the scout by the hand, and led him to the feet of Tamenund.

“Father,” he said, “look at this pale-face; a just man, and the friend of the Delawares.”

“What name has he gained by his deeds?”

“We call him Hawkeye,” Uncas replied, using the Delaware phrase; “for his sight never fails. The Hurons know him better by the death he gives their warriors; with them he is ‘The Long Rifle.’”

“Where is the Huron?” demanded Tamenund.

Magua, whose feelings during that scene in which Uncas had triumphed may be much better imagined than described, answered to the call by stepping boldly in front of the patriarch.

“The just Tamenund,” he said, “will not keep what a Huron has lent.”

“Tell me, son of my brother,” returned the sage, avoiding the dark countenance of Le Subtil and turning gladly to Uncas, “has the stranger a conqueror’s right over you?”

“He has none.”

“Over La Longue Carabine?”

“No.”

“Over the stranger and the white maiden that came into my camp together?”

“He has no rights over them.”

“And the woman that the Huron left with my warriors?”



Uncas made no reply.

“And the woman that the Huron has brought into my camp,” repeated Tamenund gravely.

“She is mine,” cried Magua, shaking his hand in triumph at Uncas. “Mohican, you know that she is mine.”

“My son is silent,” said Tamenund, endeavoring to read the expression of the face that the youth turned from him in sorrow.

“It is so,” was the low answer. “According to Indian law, Cora still belongs to Magua.”

A short and impressive pause succeeded, during which it was very apparent with what reluctance the multitude admitted the justice of Magua’s claim. At length the sage said in a firm voice, “Huron, depart.”

“As he came, just Tamenund,” demanded the wily Magua, “or with hands filled with the faith of the Delawares? The wigwam of Le Renard Subtil is empty. Make him strong with his own.”

“Then depart with your own. The Great Spirit forbids that a Delaware should be unjust.”

Magua advanced and seized his captive strongly by the arm. The Delawares fell back in silence; and Cora, as if conscious that protest would be useless, prepared to submit to her fate without resistance.

“Hold, hold!” cried Duncan, springing forward. “Huron, have mercy! Her ransom will make you rich.”

“Magua is a redskin. He wants not the beads of the pale-faces.”

“Gold, silver, powder, lead—all that a warrior needs shall be in your wigwam; all that becomes the greatest chief.”

“Le Subtil is very strong,” cried Magua, violently shaking the hand which grasped the unresisting arm of Cora. “He has his revenge!”

“Mighty ruler of providence!” exclaimed Heyward, clasping his hands together in agony. “Can this be suffered! To you, just Tamenund, I appeal for mercy.”

“The words of the Delaware are said,” returned the sage, closing his eyes and dropping back into his seat, alike wearied with his mental and bodily exertion. “Men speak not twice.”

“Ay, go,” cried Duncan; “go, Magua, go. These Delawares have their laws, which forbid them to detain you; but I—I have no such obligation. Go, malignant monster—why do you delay?”

It would be difficult to describe the expression with which Magua listened to this threat to follow. There was at first a fierce and manifest display of joy, and then it was instantly subdued in a look of cunning coldness.

“The woods are open,” he was content with answering. “Come.”

“Hold,” cried Hawkeye, seizing Duncan by the arm, and detaining him by violence; “you know not the trickery of the imp. He would lead you to an ambush and your death.”

“Huron,” interrupted Uncas, who, submissive to the stern customs of his people, had been an attentive

and grave listener to all that passed; "Huron, the justice of the Delawares comes from the Great Spirit. Look at the sun. He is now in the upper branches of the hemlock. Your path is short and open. When he is seen above the trees, there will be men on your trail."

"I hear a crow!" exclaimed Magua, with a taunting laugh. "Go!" he added, shaking his hand at the crowd, which had slowly opened to admit his passage.

His parting insults were listened to in a dead silence, and the triumphant Magua passed unmolested into the forest, followed by his passive captive and protected by the laws of Indian hospitality.







## CHAPTER 24

So long as their enemy and his victim continued in sight, the multitude remained motionless; but the instant he disappeared, the group became tossed and agitated by fierce and powerful passion. Uncas maintained his elevated stand, keeping his eyes on the form of Cora until the colors of her dress were blended with the foliage of the forest. Then he descended and moved silently through the throng and disappeared into a lodge. Finally the Mohican reappeared with one half of his fine features hid under a cloud of threatening black. This was the signal for the war dance.

When the sun reached the point that signified the end of the truce with Magua, the whole face of the encampment was instantly changed. The warriors, who were already armed and painted, became as still as if they were incapable of any uncommon burst of emotion. Duncan saw Alice to a place of safety, and then sought the scout, with a countenance that denoted how eagerly he awaited the approaching contest.

But Hawkeye was too much accustomed to the war-song to betray any interest in the passing scene. He



merely cast an occasional look at the number and quality of the warriors, who from time to time signified their readiness to accompany Uncas to the field. In this particular he was soon satisfied.

The Delawares left their own encampment, and then halted for orders, apprehensive of being led into an ambush.

The calm but still impatient Uncas now collected his chiefs and divided his power. He presented Hawkeye as a warrior, often tried and always found deserving of confidence. When he found his friend met with a favorable reception, he bestowed on him the command of twenty men, like himself active, skilful, and resolute. He gave the Delawares to understand the rank of Heyward among the troops of the pale-faces and then tendered to him a trust of equal authority. But Duncan declined the charge, professing his readiness to serve as a volunteer by the side of the scout. After this disposition the young Mohican appointed various native chiefs to fill the different situations of responsibility. Since time was pressing, he gave forth the word to march. He was cheerfully but silently obeyed by more than two hundred men.

Their entrance into the forest was perfectly unmolested; nor did they encounter any living objects until they came upon the lairs of their own scouts. Here a halt was ordered, and the chiefs were assembled to hold a "whispering council."

At this meeting many plans of operation were suggested, though none of a character to meet the wishes of their ardent leader. Had Uncas followed the promptings of his own inclinations, he would have led his followers to the charge without a moment's delay and put the conflict to the hazard of an instant issue; but such a course would have been in opposition to all the received practices and opinions of his countrymen. He, therefore, had to adopt a caution that in the present temper of his mind he disliked, and to listen to advice at which his fiery spirit chafed, under the vivid recollection of Cora's danger and Magua's insolence.

After an unsatisfactory conference of many minutes a solitary individual was seen advancing from the side of the enemy with such apparent haste as to induce the belief he might be a messenger seeking a truce. When within a hundred yards, however, of the cover behind which the Delaware council had assembled, the stranger hesitated, appeared uncertain what course to take, and finally halted. All eyes were now turned on Uncas, as if seeking directions how to proceed.

"Hawkeye," said the young chief in a low voice, "that messenger must never speak to the Hurons again."

"His time has come," said the scout, thrusting the long barrel of his rifle through the leaves and taking

his deliberate and fatal aim. But instead of pulling the trigger he lowered the muzzle again, and indulged himself in a fit of his peculiar mirth. "I took the imp for a Huron, as I'm a miserable sinner!" he said. "But when my eye ranged along his ribs for a place to get the bullet in—would you believe it, Uncas—I saw the musician's instrument; and so, after all, it is the man they call Gamut, whose death can profit no one, and whose life may be made serviceable to our own ends."

So saying, Hawkeye laid aside his rifle. Crawling through the bushes until within hearing of David, he attempted to repeat the musical effort which had conducted himself with so much safety through the Huron encampment. David soon discovered the hidden songster.

"I wonder what the Hurons will think of that!" said the scout, laughing, as he took his companion by the arm and urged him towards the rear. "If the knaves lie within ear-shot, they will say there are two lunatics instead of one! But here we are safe," he added, pointing to Uncas and his associates. "Now tell us what has happened."

David gazed about him at the fierce and wild-looking chiefs but was soon assured by the presence of faces that he knew.

"The Hurons are abroad in goodly numbers," said David, "and, I fear, with evil intent. There has been



much howling and ungodly revelry in their habitations within the past hour; so much so, in truth, that I have fled to the Delawares in search of peace."

"Where are the Hurons?"

"They lie hid in the forest between this spot and their village in such force that wisdom should teach you instantly to return."

Uncas cast a glance along the range of trees which concealed his own band and mentioned the name of—

"Magua?"

"Is among them. He brought in the maiden that had stayed with the Delawares. Leaving her in the cave, he has put himself, like a raging wolf, at the head of his savages. I know not what has troubled his spirit so greatly!"

"He has left her, you say, in the cave!" interrupted Heyward. "'Tis well that we know its situation! May not something be done for her instant relief?"

Uncas looked earnestly at the scout, before he asked, "What says Hawkeye?"

"Give me twenty rifles. I will turn to the right along the stream and join Chingachgook and the colonel. You shall then hear the whoop from that quarter; with this wind one may easily send it a mile. Then, Uncas, drive in their front. When they come within range of our pieces, we will fire. After this we will carry their village and take the woman from the cave. There may be no great learning, major, in this plan,

but with courage and patience it can all be done.”

“I like it much,” cried Duncan, who saw the release of Cora was the primary object in the mind of the scout; “I like it much. Let it be instantly attempted.”

After a short conference, the plan was agreed upon. The different signals were appointed, and the chiefs separated, each to his allotted station.

## CHAPTER 25

“We are likely to have a good day for a fight,” said Hawkeye, addressing Heyward and glancing his eye upwards at the clouds. “Everything is favorable; they have the wind, which will bring down their noises and their smoke, too, whereas with us it will be first a shot and then a clear view.” Pointing in the direction he wished to proceed, Hawkeye advanced, the band breaking off in single files and following accurately in his footsteps.

The party was, however, scarcely uncovered before a volley from a dozen rifles was heard in their rear. A Delaware leaped high into the air, like a wounded deer, and fell at his whole length, perfectly dead.

“Ah! I feared some deviltry like this!” exclaimed the scout. With the quickness of thought, he added in his adopted tongue, “To cover, men, and charge!”

The band dispersed at the word, and before Heyward had well recovered from his surprise, he found himself standing alone with David. Luckily, the Hurons had already fallen back, and he was safe from their fire. But this state of things was evidently to be of short continuance; for the scout set the example of pressing on their retreat by discharging his rifle



and darting from tree to tree as his enemy slowly yielded ground.

The assault had been made by a very small party of the Hurons, which, however, continued to increase in numbers as it retired on its friends, until the return fire was nearly equal to that maintained by the advancing Delawares. Heyward threw himself among the combatants. Imitating the necessary caution of his companions, he made quick discharges with his own rifle. The contest now grew warm and stationary. Few were injured, as both parties kept their bodies as much protected as possible by the trees; never, indeed, exposing any part of their persons except in the act of taking aim. But the chances were gradually growing unfavorable to Hawkeye and his band.

The quick-sighted scout perceived his danger, without knowing how to remedy it. He saw it was more dangerous to retreat than to maintain his ground, while he found his enemy throwing out men on his flank.

At this embarrassing moment, when they began to think the whole of the hostile tribe was gradually encircling them, they heard the yell of combatants and the rattling of arms echoing under the arches of the wood at the place where Uncas was posted.

The effects of this attack were instantaneous, and to the scout and his friends a great relief. While Hawkeye's own surprise had been anticipated and had consequently failed, the enemy, in their turn, had left

too small a force to resist the impetuous onset of the young Mohican.

Animating his followers by his voice and his own example, Hawkeye then gave the word to bear down upon their foes. The charge, in that rude species of warfare, consisted merely in pushing from cover to cover nearer to the enemy. In this maneuver he was instantly and successfully obeyed. The Hurons were compelled to withdraw, and the scene of the contest rapidly changed from the more open ground to a spot where the enemy found cover. Here the struggle was protracted, arduous, and of doubtful issue. The Delawares, though none of them fell, began to bleed freely as a result of the disadvantage at which they were held.

Turning with a prompt and decided air Hawkeye called aloud to his Indians. His words were answered by a shout. At a given signal each warrior made a swift movement around his particular tree. The sight of so many dark bodies at the same instant drew a hasty and consequently an ineffectual fire from the Hurons. Without stopping to breathe, the Delawares leaped towards the wood, like so many panthers springing upon their prey. Hawkeye was in front, brandishing his terrible rifle and animating his followers by his example. A few of the older and more cunning Hurons, who had not been deceived by the trick which had been practised to draw their fire, now made a close and deadly discharge of their pieces and

felled three of his foremost warriors. But the shock was insufficient to repel the charge. The Delawares broke into the cover with the ferocity of their natures and swept away every trace of resistance by the fury of the onset.

The combat endured only for an instant, hand to hand, and then the enemy yielded ground rapidly until they reached the opposite margin of the cover. At this critical moment, when the success of the struggle was again becoming doubtful, the crack of the rifle was heard behind the Hurons, and a bullet came whizzing and was followed by the fierce and appalling yell of the war-whoop.

“There speaks Chingachgook!” shouted Hawkeye, answering the cry. “We have them now in face and back!”

The effect on the Hurons was instantaneous. Discouraged by an assault from a quarter that left them no opportunity for cover, their warriors uttered a common yell of disappointment. Breaking off in a body, they spread themselves across the opening, heedless of every consideration but flight. Many fell under the bullets and the blows of the pursuing Delawares.

We shall not pause to detail the meeting between the scout and Chingachgook, or the more touching interview that Duncan held with Munro. A few brief and hurried words served to explain the state of things to both parties. Then Hawkeye, pointing out Chingachgook to his band, resigned the chief authority to



the hands of the Mohican chief. Chingachgook assumed the station to which his birth and experience gave him so distinguished a claim. Following the footsteps of the scout, he led the party back through the thicket, his men scalping the fallen Hurons. They proceeded until they gained a point where Chingachgook was content to make a halt.

The warriors, who had breathed freely in the preceding struggle, were now posted on a bit of level ground, sprinkled with trees in sufficient numbers to conceal them. The land fell away rather sharply in front, and beneath their eyes stretched for several miles a narrow, dark, and wooded vale. It was through this dense and dark forest that Uncas was still contending with the main body of the Hurons.

At that instant the whoop was given, and a dozen Hurons fell by a discharge from Chingachgook and his band. The shout that followed was answered by a single war-cry from the forest, and a yell passed through the air that sounded as if a thousand throats were united in a common effort. The Hurons staggered, deserting the center of their line, and Uncas issued from the forest through the opening they left, at the head of a hundred warriors.

Waving his hands right and left, the young chief pointed out the enemy to his followers, who separated in pursuit. The war now divided, both wings of the broken Hurons seeking protection in the woods again, hotly pressed by the victorious warriors of the Dela-

wares. One little knot of Hurons, however, had disdained to seek a cover, and were retiring like lions at bay, slowly and sullenly up the slope. Magua was conspicuous in this party, both by his fierce and savage mien and by the air of haughty authority he yet maintained.

In his eagerness to speed the pursuit, Uncas had left himself nearly alone; but the moment his eyes caught the figure of Le Subtil, every other consideration was forgotten. Raising his cry of battle, which recalled some six or seven warriors, and reckless of the inequality of their numbers, he rushed upon the enemy. Le Renard, who watched the movement, paused to receive him with secret joy. But at the moment when he thought the rashness of his impetuous young assailant had left him at his mercy, another shout was given, and Hawkeye was seen rushing to the rescue, attended by all his white associates. The Huron instantly turned and began a rapid retreat up the ascent.

Uncas continued the pursuit with the speed of the wind. In vain Hawkeye called to him to take cover; the young Mohican braved the dangerous fire of his enemies and soon compelled them to a flight as swift as his own headlong speed. It was fortunate that the race was of short continuance, and that the white men were much favored by their position, or the Delaware would soon have outstripped all his companions and fallen a victim to his own boldness. But before such a

calamity could happen, the pursuers and pursued entered the village within striking distance of each other.

Excited by the presence of their dwellings and tired of the chase, the Hurons now made a stand and fought around their council-lodge with the fury of despair. The onset and the issue were like the passage and destruction of a whirlwind. The tomahawk of Uncas, the blows of Hawkeye, and even the still nervous arm of Munro were all busy for that passing moment, and the ground was quickly strewn with their enemies.

Still Magua, though daring and much exposed, escaped from every effort against his life. Raising a yell that spoke volumes of anger and disappointment, the subtle chief darted away from the place, attended by his only two surviving friends, leaving the Delawares engaged in stripping the dead of the bloody trophies of their victory.

But Uncas, who had vainly sought him in the battle, bounded forward in pursuit; Hawkeye, Heyward, and David still pressing on his footsteps. The utmost that the scout could effect was to keep the muzzle of his rifle a little in advance of his friend, to whom, however, it answered every purpose of a charmed shield. Once Magua appeared disposed to make another and a final effort to revenge his losses; but, abandoning his intention as soon as demonstrated, he leaped into a thicket of bushes, through which he was followed by his enemies, and suddenly entered the mouth of the cave where Cora was held captive.



Hawkeye raised a shout of success and proclaimed aloud that now they were certain of their game. The pursuers dashed into the long and narrow entrance, in time to catch a glimpse of the retreating forms of the Hurons. Their passage through the natural galleries of the cavern was preceded by the shrieks and cries of hundreds of women and children. The place, seen by its dim and uncertain light, appeared like the shades of the infernal regions, across which unhappy ghosts and savage demons were flitting in multitudes.

Still Uncas kept his eye on Magua, as if, like him, possessed by a single object. Heyward and the scout pressed on his rear, actuated by a common feeling. But their way was becoming intricate, in those dark and gloomy passages, and the glimpses of the retiring warriors less distinct and frequent. For a moment the trace was believed to be lost, when a white robe was seen fluttering in the farther extremity of a passage that seemed to lead up the mountain.

“Tis Cora!” exclaimed Heyward, in a voice in which horror and delight were wildly mingled.

“Cora! Cora!” echoed Uncas, bending forward like a deer.

“Tis the maiden!” shouted the scout. “Courage, lady; we come!—We come!”

The chase was renewed with diligence. But the way was rugged, broken, and in spots nearly impassable. Uncas abandoned his rifle and leaped forward with headlong haste. Heyward rashly imitated his example,

though both were a moment afterwards warned of its madness by hearing the bellowing of a gun that the Hurons found time to discharge down the passage in the rocks, the bullet from which even gave the young Mohican a slight wound.

“We must close!” said the scout, passing his friends by a desperate leap. “The knaves will pick us all off at this distance. See; they hold the maiden so as to shield themselves!”

Though his words were unheard, his example was followed by his companions, who by incredible exertions got near enough to the fugitives to perceive that Cora was borne along between the two warriors, while Magua prescribed the direction and manner of their flight. At this moment the forms of all four were strongly drawn against an opening toward the sky, and they disappeared. Nearly frantic with disappointment, Uncas and Heyward increased efforts that already seemed superhuman, and they issued from the cavern on the side of the mountain in time to note the route of the pursued. The course lay up the ascent, and still continued hazardous and laborious.

Encumbered by his rifle, the scout allowed the others to precede him a little; Uncas, in his turn, taking the lead of Heyward. In this manner, rocks, precipices, and difficulties were climbed in an incredibly short space, that at another time would have been deemed almost insuperable. But the impetuous young men were rewarded by finding that, encumbered with

Cora, the Hurons were losing ground in the race.

“Stay, dog of the Hurons!” exclaimed Uncas, shaking his bright tomahawk at Magua.

“I will go no farther,” cried Cora, stopping unexpectedly on a ledge of rocks that overhung a deep precipice near the summit of the mountain. “Kill me if you will, detestable Huron; I will go no farther.”

The supporters of the maiden raised their ready tomahawks with impious joy, but Magua stayed the uplifted arms. The Huron chief, after casting the weapons he had wrested from his companions over the rock, drew his knife and turned to his captive with a look in which conflicting passions fiercely contended.

“Woman,” he said, “choose; the wigwam or the knife of Le Subtil!”

Cora regarded him not, but dropping on her knees, she raised her eyes and stretched her arms towards heaven.

“Woman,” repeated Magua hoarsely, and endeavoring in vain to catch a glance from her serene and beaming eye, “choose!”

But Cora neither heard nor heeded his demand. The form of the Huron trembled in every fibre, and he raised his arm on high, but dropped it again with a bewildered air, like one who doubted. Once more he struggled with himself and lifted the keen weapon again; but just then a piercing cry was heard above them, and Uncas appeared, leaping frantically from a fearful height upon the ledge. Magua recoiled a step;







and one of his assistants, profiting by the chance, plunged his own knife into the bosom of Cora.

The Huron sprang like a tiger on his offending and already retreating countryman, but the falling form of Uncas separated the combatants. Diverted from his object by this interruption and maddened by the murder he had just witnessed, Magua buried his weapon in the back of the fallen Delaware, uttering an unearthly shout as he committed the deed. But Uncas arose from the blow and struck the murderer of Cora to his feet by an effort in which the last of his failing strength was expended. Then, with a stern and steady look, he turned to Magua and indicated by the expression of his eye all that he would do, had not the power deserted him. The latter seized the nerveless arm of the unresisting Delaware and passed his knife into his bosom several times before his victim fell dead at his feet.

“Mercy! mercy! Huron,” cried Heyward from above, in tones nearly choked by horror; “give mercy, and you shall receive it!”

Whirling the bloody knife up at the imploring youth, the victorious Magua uttered a cry so fierce, so wild, and yet so joyous that it conveyed the sounds of savage triumph to the ears of those who fought in the valley, a thousand feet below. He was answered by a burst from the lips of the scout, whose tall person was just then seen moving swiftly towards him along those dangerous crags with steps as bold and reckless as if



he possessed the power to move in air. But when the hunter reached the scene of the ruthless massacre, the ledge held only the dead.

His keen eye took a single look at the victims and shot its glances over the difficulties of the ascent in front. Then Magua issued from a crevice. Stepping with calm indifference over the body of the last of his associates, he leaped a wide fissure and ascended the rocks. A single bound would carry him to the brow of the precipice and assure his safety. Before taking the leap, however, the Huron paused and shaking his hand at the scout, he shouted, "The pale-faces are dogs! The Delawares are women! Magua leaves them on the rocks, for the crows!"

Laughing hoarsely, he made a desperate leap and fell short of his mark, though his hand grasped a shrub on the edge. The form of Hawkeye had crouched like a beast about to take its spring, and his frame trembled so violently with eagerness that the muzzle of the half-raised rifle played like a leaf fluttering in the wind. Without exhausting himself with fruitless efforts, the cunning Magua suffered his body to drop to the length of his arms, and found a fragment for his feet to rest on.

Then summoning all his powers, he renewed the attempt and so far succeeded, as to draw his knees on the edge of the mountain. It was now, when the body of his enemy was most collected together, that the agitated weapon of the scout was drawn to his shoulder.

The surrounding rocks themselves were not steadier than the piece became for the single instant that it poured out its contents. The arms of the Huron relaxed and his body fell back a little, while his knees still kept their position. Turning a relentless look on his enemy, he shook a hand in grim defiance. But his hold loosened and his body was seen cutting the air with its head downwards in its rapid flight to destruction.

## CHAPTER 26

The sun found the Delawares on the succeeding day a nation of mourners. The sounds of the battle were over. They had satisfied their ancient grudge and had avenged their recent quarrel with the Hurons by the destruction of a whole community. Still no shouts of success, no songs of triumph were heard in rejoicings for their victory. Pride and exultation were buried in grief.

Six Delaware girls, with their long, dark, flowing tresses, stood apart and occasionally strewed sweet-scented herbs and forest flowers on a litter that supported all that now remained of the ardent, high-souled, and generous Cora. Her form was concealed in many wrappers of the same simple manufacture, and her face was shut forever from the gaze of men. At her feet was seated the grief-stricken Munro. His aged head was bowed nearly to the earth. Gamut stood at his side, his meek head bared to the rays of the sun. Heyward was also near, supporting himself against a tree and endeavoring to keep down those sudden risings of sorrow that it required his utmost manhood to subdue.

But sad and melancholy as this group may easily be



imagined, it was less touching than another that occupied the opposite space of the same area. Seated, as in life, with his form and limbs arranged in grave and decent calm Uncas appeared, arrayed in the most gorgeous ornaments that the wealth of the tribe could furnish.

Directly in front of the corpse Chingachgook was placed without arms, paint, or adornment of any sort. The Mohican warrior kept a steady, anxious look on the cold and senseless countenance of his son. So riveted and intense had been that gaze and so unchanging his attitude that a stranger might not have told the living from the dead, but for the occasional gleamings of a troubled spirit that shot across the dark face.

Hawkeye was near by, leaning thoughtfully on his own fatal and avenging weapon; while Tamenund, supported by the elders of his nation, occupied a high place at hand.

A girl, selected for the task, began the services by modest references to the qualities of the deceased warrior. She called him the "panther of his tribe," and described him as one whose moccasin left no trail on the dews; whose bound was like the leap of the young fawn; whose eye was brighter than a star in the dark night, and whose voice, in battle, was loud as the thunder of the Great Spirit.

Then those who followed changed their tones to a milder and still more tender strain and referred to the stranger maiden, Cora, who had left the earth at a

time so near Uncas's departure as to make clear the will of the Great Spirit. They told Uncas to be kind to her and to have consideration for her ignorance of those arts which were so necessary to the comfort of a warrior like himself. They dwelt upon her matchless beauty and on her noble resolution without any envy.

After this others spoke to the maiden herself, in the low, soft language of tenderness and love. They encouraged her to be of cheerful mind and to fear nothing for future welfare. A hunter would be her companion who knew how to provide for her smallest wants. A warrior would be at her side who was able to protect her against every danger. They promised that her path should be pleasant and her burden light. They cautioned her against unavailing regrets for the friends of her youth and the scenes where her fathers had dwelt. They assured her that the "blessed hunting-grounds" of the Indians contained vales as pleasant, streams as pure, and flowers as sweet, as the "heaven of the pale-faces." They advised her to be attentive to the wants of her companion and never to forget the distinction which the Great Spirit had so wisely established between them.

Then in a wild burst of their chant they sang with united voices of Uncas. They pronounced him noble, manly and generous, all that became a warrior and all that a maid might love. The Delaware girls had found no favor in his eyes! That Cora was of a blood purer and richer than the rest of her nation, any eye might

have seen; that she was equal to the dangers and daring of a life in the woods, her conduct had proved. Now, they added, the "wise one of the earth" had transplanted her to a place where she would find congenial spirits and might be forever happy.

A signal was given by one of the elder chiefs to the women who crowded that part of the circle near which the body of Cora lay. Obedient to the sign, the girls raised the rude coffin to the elevation of their heads and advanced with slow and regulated steps, chanting another wailing song in praise of the deceased.

After the burial the friends and kin of Cora prepared to depart. Duncan found time to press the hand of the scout and to repeat the terms of an engagement they had made, to meet again within the posts of the British army. Then gladly throwing himself into the saddle, he spurred his charger to the side of the litter, from which low and stifled sobs alone announced the presence of Alice. In this manner, the head of Munro again dropping on his bosom, with Heyward and David following in sorrowing silence, all the white men with the exception of Hawkeye passed from before the eyes of the Delawares and were soon buried in the vast forests of that region.

But the tie which had briefly united the Indians with the strangers was not so easily broken. Years passed away before the legendary tale of the white maiden and of the young warrior of the Mohicans was forgotten. The Indians learned through Hawkeye, who served for years afterwards as a link between them



and civilized life, that Munro died not much later. They learned, too, that Duncan had at last married Alice and brought back the bright smiles which were better suited to her joyous nature.

But these were events of a time later than that which concerns our tale. Let us return to the Indian burial ceremony. Deserted by the other whites, Hawkeye returned to the spot where his own sympathies led him. He was just in time to catch a parting look of the features of Uncas. They paused to permit the longing and lingering gaze of the sturdy woodsman. Then came a procession like the other, and the whole nation was collected by the temporary grave of the chief—temporary, because it was proper that at some future day his bones should rest among those of his own people.

Chingachgook became once more the object of the common attention.

“Why do my brothers mourn!” he said, regarding the dark race of dejected warriors by whom he was surrounded. “Why do my daughters weep! That a young man has gone to the happy hunting-grounds? That a chief has filled his time with honor? He was good; he was dutiful; he was brave. Who can deny it? The Great Spirit had need of such a warrior, and He has called him away. As for me, the father of Uncas, I am a blazed pine in a clearing of the pale-faces. My race has gone from the shores of the salt lake and the hills of the Delawares. I am alone—”

“No, no,” cried Hawkeye, who had been gazing with a yearning look at the rigid features of his friend, “no, Chingachgook, not alone. Our colors may be different, but God has so placed us as to journey in the same path. I have no kin, and I may also say, like you, no people. He was your son and a redskin by nature; and it may be that your blood was nearer—but if ever I forget the lad who has so often fought at my side in war and slept at my side in peace, may He who made us all forget me! The boy has left us for a time; but, Chingachgook, you are not alone.”

Chingachgook grasped the hand that, in the warmth of feeling, the scout had stretched across the fresh earth. In that attitude of friendship these two sturdy and intrepid woodsmen bowed their heads together, while scalding tears fell to their feet, watering the grave of Uncas like drops of falling rain.

In the midst of the awful stillness with which such a burst of feeling was received, Tamenund lifted his voice to disperse the multitude.

“It is enough,” he said. “Go, children of the Delaware. Why should Tamenund stay? The pale-faces are masters of the earth, and the time of the redmen has not yet come again. My day has been too long. In the morning I saw the sons of the Delawares happy and strong; and yet, before the night has come, have I lived to see the last warrior of the wise race of the Mohicans.”





## READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

### Chapter 1

Supply the correct answer for each of the following blanks.

(Do not write in this book.)

1. The man in charge of the little party was named —.
2. After the arrival of the stranger the total number of people in the party was —.
3. Of the two girls the one who was more nervous was —.
4. "The place of real danger" according to Heyward was near —.
5. "The painted Indian" referred to in the opening speech acted as — for the party.
6. — volunteered to take the group by a short cut.
7. The destination of the party was —.
8. David Gamut taught —.
9. — and — were warned against singing aloud in the forest.
10. The person who appeared *odd* and *ungainly* was —.

### Chapter 2

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. Chingachgook told Hawkeye the history of his people.
2. Chingachgook was friendly toward the Hurons.
3. Uncas reported that no Hurons were in the forest.
4. Chingachgook considered himself the last of the Mohicans.
5. Hawkeye, like the Indians, was perfectly quiet and relaxed during the conversation.

262 READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

6. Chingachgook was dressed in the clothing of the white men.
7. When Uncas entered, he blurted out his message immediately.
8. Hawkeye first heard the approach of the horses.
9. Chingachgook was the son of Uncas.
10. According to Chingachgook the Delawares were once powerful.

Chapter 3

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. *Le Renard Subtil* referred to ——. (a. Uncas b. Magua c. Chingachgook)
2. —— offered to wound Magua. (a. David Gamut b. Hawkeye c. Duncan)
3. Magua belonged to the —— tribe. (a. Huron b. Delaware c. Mohican)
4. The party was actually —— distance from Fort Edward. (a. a day's b. an hour's c. a few days')
5. Hawkeye doubted very much that Magua could be ——. (a. treacherous b. lost c. hungry)
6. When Duncan placed his hand upon Magua, the Indian ——. (a. allowed himself to be introduced to Hawkeye b. fled c. offered to take Duncan to William Henry)
7. The name of the girls' father was ——. (a. William Henry b. Edward c. Munro)
8. —— refused at first to believe that Magua could be treacherous. (a. David Gamut b. Chingachgook c. Duncan)
9. Hawkeye was prejudiced against the ——. (a. Hurons b. English c. Delawares)
10. Indians could tell direction by ——. (a. compass b. a sixth sense c. moss on trees)

Chapter 4

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. Hawkeye believed that he had seriously wounded Magua.
2. Hawkeye felt that the wiser plan was not to pursue Magua.
3. The leaders decided that the colt had to die.
4. David Gamut was the owner of the colt.
5. At the last minute the group decided to kill all the horses.
6. The canoe was allowed to drift rapidly downstream.
7. They came finally to the base of a waterfall.
8. After Magua's escape, Hawkeye firmly believed that there was no danger from the Indians.
9. Hawkeye gratefully accepted the reward that Duncan promised.
10. Hawkeye insisted upon silence in the woods.

Chapter 5

Complete the paragraph by selecting answers from the list of words or phrases below. You may use an answer more than once.

Alice	Duncan	rocks
cavern	explosion	sing
Chingachgook	forest	trapped
Cora	Hawkeye	Uncas
cry	outlets	weapons
David	read aloud	whipped

After they had entered the ———, Duncan worried that they might be ———. ——— assured them that their hiding place had two ———. During the meal ——— helped the two girls, but he showed more attention to ——— than to her sister. ——— eagerly accepted the invitation to ———. Suddenly there was a weird ———. ——— admitted that he couldn't explain it.



## 264 READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

### Chapter 6

For each name in Column A find TWO items in Column B. There will be one left over in Column B.

A	B
1. Duncan	a. explained the origin of the cries
2. Alice	b. deadly marksman with rifle
3. David Gamut	c. wounded by first shots
4. Uncas	d. was first to cry out after attack had begun
5. Hawkeye	e. was sent into the cavern with Cora
	f. thought the attack might not be renewed
	g. fell over waterfall
	h. carried into the cavern by Uncas
	i. saved Duncan's life
	j. scorned a pistol
	k. scolded by Hawkeye for wasting powder

### Chapter 7

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. Duncan grasped the hand of — in gratitude. (a. Hawkeye b. David c. Uncas)
2. After the shot that had proved so dangerous, Hawkeye noticed that the lead had been —. (a. cooled b. flattened c. rounded)
3. Actually the shot had come from —. (a. the waterfall b. the canoe c. the tree)
4. During the exchange of shots — was slightly wounded. (a. Duncan b. Uncas c. Hawkeye)

5. ——— urged that the swaying Huron be put out of his misery. (a. Duncan b. Uncas c. Hawkeye)
6. ——— had been stolen by the Hurons. (a. The canoe b. Hawkeye's rifle c. Duncan's red coat)
7. The Mohicans awaited their death ———. (a. nervously b. calmly c. regretfully)
8. ——— urged the Mohicans and Hawkeye to escape. (a. Alice b. Cora c. Duncan)
9. ——— was the first to escape. (a. Uncas b. Chingachgook c. Hawkeye)
10. ——— wished to stay behind. (a. Uncas b. Chingachgook c. Hawkeye)

### Chapter 8

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. After the three men had gone, the forest became quiet.
2. Cora feared that David's singing might be dangerous.
3. "La Longue Carabine" was another name for Chingachgook.
4. Duncan knew that Hawkeye had escaped.
5. The Indian who finally discovered the little party was Magua.
6. At one point Duncan thought the Indians had overlooked their hiding place.
7. A heavy rock guarded the entrance to the cavern of Duncan.
8. The Hurons were secretly glad that Hawkeye had escaped.
9. Alice never had any hope that Hawkeye and the Mohicans would be able to save her and the others.
10. Duncan fired a shot in an attempt to kill Magua.

## Chapter 9

Supply the correct answer for each of the following blanks.

1. — did not join in the plundering of the others.
2. The Indians were most interested in finding —.
3. “Le Gros Serpent” was the French name for —.
4. “Le Cerf Agile” was the French name for —.
5. In English “Le Cerf Agile” means —.
6. Duncan explained that the three men had escaped by means of —.
7. The captives were carried off in —.
8. The prisoners finally were left with a smaller group of savages, — in number.
9. At the head of this group was —.
10. — tried to leave behind traces of their path.

## Chapter 10

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. Magua declared that he wanted to speak to —. (a. Alice b. Cora c. David)
2. Magua was moved principally by —. (a. friendship b. gentleness c. revenge)
3. Magua placed the blame on — for his downfall. (a. Cora b. the white men c. the Hurons)
4. Magua was most bitter toward —. (a. Munro b. Alice c. Duncan)
5. Cora faced Magua —. (a. bravely b. tearfully c. gaily)
6. Magua declared that he was willing to send — back to safety. (a. Cora b. Alice c. David)
7. Magua wished to take — with him. (a. Cora b. Alice c. Duncan)



8. Duncan — Magua's offer. (a. agreed to b. disapproved of c. was indifferent to)
9. At the reply of Alice, Magua —. (a. threw his tomahawk b. lighted the fire c. threw a knife)
10. — burst from his bonds. (a. Duncan b. David c. Magua)

### Chapter 11

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. In the struggle Magua attacked Chingachgook.
2. Uncas slew his opponent at once.
3. Alice broke loose and flung herself before Cora to protect her.
4. Uncas saved the life of Cora.
5. Chingachgook pretended to be fatally wounded to trick Magua.
6. Both Mohicans refused to scalp those warriors who had been slain.
7. Hawkeye declared that he and the Mohicans had been all the way to Fort Edward and back.
8. Cora's action in breaking the bush had helped Hawkeye and the others to follow.
9. The captives had been forced to wear moccasins.
10. Magua escaped after seriously wounding Uncas.

## Chapter 12

Match items in Column B with those in Column A. There will be one left over in B.

- | A                  | B  |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. French sentinel | a. leader of the French forces                     |
| 2. Hawkeye         | b. the name of the fort                            |
| 3. William Henry   | c. challenged the party                            |
| 4. Uncas           | d. the name of the lake                            |
| 5. Chingachgook    | e. scalped the sentinel                            |
| 6. Duncan          | f. bravery complimented by Hawkeye                 |
| 7. Munro           | g. suggested following the track of the cannonball |
| 8. Cora            | h. cried out to her father                         |
| 9. Alice           | i. went to the head of the royal Americans         |
| 10. Montcalm       | j. rejoiced to see Cora and Alice                  |
|                    | k. regretted the death of the sentinel             |

## Chapter 13

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

- Munro hoped for ——. (a. reinforcements from Webb b. the surrender of Webb's army c. assistance from Montcalm's scouts)
- Montcalm's surrender terms were ——. (a. dishonorable b. scorned by Munro c. honorable)
- Munro felt that —— should also be considered his "children." (a. the Hurons b. the British soldiers c. the Mohicans)
- Duncan appointed —— to watch over the girls. (a. Uncas b. David c. a British soldier)
- At the rear of the column could be found ——. (a. the strongest b. a French rear-guard c. the wounded)

6. — moved about among the Indians, stirring them to action. (a. Montcalm b. Magua c. a French grenadier)
7. The massacre started over —. (a. a coat b. a shawl c. a rifle)
8. After the murder of the mother and her child — ran wild. (a. the French b. the English c. the Hurons)
9. David saved the lives of the sisters by —. (a. his singing b. his skill with the rifle c. his strength and bravery)
10. Magua picked up and carried off —. (a. Cora b. Alice c. David)

#### Chapter 14

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. It was nearly a week after the capture of the fort that Hawkeye and his party arrived on the scene.
2. The French had abandoned the fort soon after its capture.
3. Hawkeye found the first clue to the presence of Cora.
4. The searching party knew that David Gamut was among those taken by Magua.
5. Uncas declared that Magua was the one who had captured the girls.
6. There were six persons in the searching party.
7. The "dark-hair" referred to Alice.
8. David Gamut had left behind his musical instrument.
9. Munro accepted all the news about his daughters calmly.
10. Hawkeye was confident that eventually the searchers would find Cora and Alice.



## Chapter 15

Supply the correct answer for each of the following blanks.

1. Hawkeye declared that the searchers had been following the valleys between the Horican and the —.
2. Uncas did not speak until — gave him permission.
3. — used false clues to throw possible pursuers off the track.
4. Uncas found the two —, untied.
5. Uncas found footsteps underneath —.
6. The one with the largest foot was —.
7. The girls had been carried in a kind of —.
8. — kept pointing out in English to the others the results of his observations.
9. — first saw what seemed to be a stranger Indian.
10. The stranger Indian was addressed by —.

## Chapter 16

Supply the correct alternative for each of the following blanks.

1. The stranger Indian turned out to be —. (a. Magua b. Uncas c. David)
2. — resolved to go among the Hurons. (a. Munro b. Duncan c. Cora)
3. David declared that Magua was —. (a. at war b. on a moose hunt c. in the Delaware camp)
4. After the two girls had been separated, Cora was sent —. (a. to the Huron camp b. to the Delaware camp c. far to the north)

5. Alice was ——. (a. kept among the Hurons b. freed c. sent among the Delawares)
6. David had been saved because the Indians considered him ——. (a. wise b. brave c. insane)
7. The neighboring tribe of Delawares were bound in blood to ——. (a. the Mohawks b. the Hurons c. the Mohicans)
8. Duncan dressed himself in the likeness of ——. (a. a warrior b. a clown c. a Mohican)
9. ——— undertook to paint Duncan. (a. Hawkeye b. Uncas c. Chingachgook)
10. Munro was to be left safely with ———. (a. Chingachgook b. David c. Uncas)

### Chapter 17

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. The Indians placed many guards around their camps.
2. The uproar was caused by the return of a hunting party.
3. Duncan tried to help Uncas by tripping a Huron.
4. Reed-that-bends was slain for cowardice.
5. Uncas at times showed fear because of the ordeal that faced him.
6. Both captives were Mohicans.
7. The two captives faced their fate calmly and bravely.
8. The Hurons could not help admiring Uncas.
9. One of the captives escaped to the woods.
10. Reed-that-bends was slain by the squaw.

## Chapter 18

Complete the paragraph by selecting answers from the list of words or phrases below. You may use a word or phrase more than once.

a bear	Duncan	Le Cerf Agile
Alice	eager	Le Gros Serpent
Chingachgook	freedom	Magua
David Gamut	Hawkeye	reluctant
death	La Longue	Uncas
	Carabine	

—— advised —— to pretend they were strangers. After they separated, an old warrior asked —— to cure the wife of his son. The “medicine man” was —— to leave at once, hoping that he might hear more about —— . Their departure was interrupted by the arrival of —— . He soon told the others that their captive was the one whom they knew by the name of —— . He promised —— to the unfortunate captive. When the old warrior and the “medicine man” left on their errand, they headed toward the mountain. There they were followed by —— and greeted finally by —— , who had a message.

## Chapter 19

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. When the warrior said, “Let my brother show his power,” he meant by *brother* —— . (a. David b. Magua c. Duncan)
2. The bear proved to be —— . (a. snarling b. laughing c. shivering)
3. Hawkeye was in the Huron village —— . (a. to save Uncas b. to spy on Magua c. to find Munro)
4. The clue to Alice’s whereabouts had been given by —— . (a. the old warrior b. David c. Duncan)



5. Duncan hesitated about going in at once to Alice because of ——. (a. his shyness b. her indifference c. his paint)
6. Immediately after Duncan found Alice, —— appeared. (a. David b. the dying woman c. Magua)
7. In their escape —— was wrapped in Indian clothes. (a. Alice b. Hawkeye c. Magua)
8. Magua was captured by ——. (a. Duncan b. Hawkeye c. David)
9. Hawkeye left disguised as ——. (a. a wildcat b. a panther c. a bear)
10. When the three separated, —— went off together. (a. Duncan and Hawkeye b. Duncan and Alice c. Alice and Hawkeye)

### Chapter 20

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. Hawkeye took a roundabout path to the lodge where Uncas had been kept.
2. With him went David Gamut.
3. David promised to make a weakling out of Le Cerf Agile.
4. The warriors believed that “the bear” was a medicine man.
5. Uncas suggested that they flee to the camp of the Delawares.
6. David at first refused to be left behind.
7. David put on the bear costume of Hawkeye.
8. Hawkeye disguised himself as David.
9. Hawkeye kept silence from the lodge to the forest.
10. “Killdeer” was another name for Hawkeye himself.

## Chapter 21

Supply the correct answer for each of the following blanks.

1. Despite the trick played upon them the Hurons spared the life of —.
2. — was freed by the Indians from his captivity in the cave.
3. Magua suggested that the Hurons visit the camp of —.
4. Magua was most interested in getting possession once again of —.
5. The warrior, who was over 100 years old, was named —.
6. Magua gave the startling news that — was in the Delaware camp.
7. The Delaware chief seemed reluctant to give up —.
8. At the head of the counsel sat —.
9. "One whose skin is neither red nor pale" could only refer to —.
10. At first, the conversation between Magua and the Delaware chief was only about —.

## Chapter 22

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. Duncan called himself "La Longue Carabine" as a means of —. (a. boasting b. saving Hawkeye c. getting a rifle to kill Magua)
2. The Indians considered Duncan's skill with the rifle —. (a. below average b. average c. above average)
3. The Indian who correctly identified "La Longue Carabine" was —. (a. Magua b. Tamenund c. Uncas)
4. Hawkeye refrained from shooting Magua because —. (a. he feared the innocent might suffer b. he felt such an end was too merciful for Magua c. he pitied him at the last minute)

5. On the second trial both men shot a gourd — away. (a. 100 feet b. 100 yards c. 100 paces)
6. On the first trial Hawkeye shot —. (a. carefully b. without seeming to aim c. first)
7. Duncan attributed Hawkeye's success to —. (a. superior aim b. more time c. chance)
8. The Delawares decided —. (a. to let Magua take his prisoners b. to refuse Magua his prisoners c. to bind Magua himself)
9. — appealed directly to Tamenund. (a. Alice b. Duncan c. Cora)
10. "A redskin in the pay of the pale-faces" refers to —. (a. Uncas b. Magua c. Tamenund)

### Chapter 23

Complete the paragraph by selecting answers from the list of words or phrases below. You may use a word or phrase more than once.

Alice	Duncan	Mohawk
bear	Hawkeye	sage
chieftain	Huron	Tamenund
Cora	Magua	tortoise
Delaware	medicine man	Uncas

The last prisoner to be brought in was —. He spoke to the old chief — in the — tongue. Tattooed on the prisoner's chest was a —, the sign of a —. The first person to be freed by the former prisoner was —. When — demanded his conqueror's rights, — had to admit that — at least belonged to him. — offered wealth in exchange, but in vain.



## Chapter 24

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. The Delawares started out in pursuit of Magua before the time they had agreed upon.
2. Uncas painted half his features black as a signal for the war dance.
3. Hawkeye was dissatisfied with the number and quality of the Delaware warriors.
4. Hawkeye was given the command of twenty men.
5. Duncan, too, took command of twenty warriors.
6. The "messenger from the Hurons" proved to be Magua.
7. Magua placed Cora in the cave.
8. Uncas was eager to attack the enemy at once.
9. David Gamut brought news of Huron war-preparations.
10. Alice insisted upon accompanying the warriors in pursuit of Cora.

## Chapter 25

Select the correct alternative for each blank.

1. The first warrior to fall in the battle was ——. (a. Magua b. a Huron c. a Delaware)
2. During the early part of the combat Hawkeye's group were aided by an attack from the place where —— was posted. (a. Uncas b. Duncan c. David)
3. At a crucial moment in the fighting —— reappeared. (a. Duncan b. Chingachgook c. David)
4. Throughout the battle and pursuit Uncas fought ——. (a. carefully b. calmly c. recklessly)
5. In the last chase Magua was accompanied by —— companions. (a. two b. six c. no)
6. The white robe fluttering belonged to ——. (a. an Indian maiden b. Alice c. Cora)

7. Magua slew ——. (a. Alice b. Cora c. Uncas)
8. —— implored Magua to show mercy. (a. Hawkeye b. Duncan c. David)
9. Magua was —— to the end. (a. defiant b. cowardly c. calm)
10. Magua was slain by ——. (a. Chingachgook b. Duncan c. Hawkeye)

### Chapter 26

Tell whether each statement is true or false.

1. The Delawares believed that Cora and Uncas were reunited in death.
2. The ceremonies for Uncas and Cora were alike in all respects.
3. Chingachgook loudly lamented the death of his son.
4. The Delaware girls confessed that Uncas had loved none of them.
5. The Delaware girls scorned Cora in their envy.
6. Munro died soon after the death of Cora.
7. Duncan and Alice never married.
8. Hawkeye left the Delawares in company with Duncan and Munro.
9. Hawkeye felt closest to Chingachgook of all the people remaining.
10. The closing words of the story are said by Chingachgook.







F  
Co

Copy 1

Cooper, James F.

AUTHOR

The Last Of The Mohicans

TITLE

F  
Co

Copy 1

Cooper, James F.  
The Last Of The Mohicans

### DATE DUE

<i>Fac</i>	MAY 24 '51		
APR 4 '51	SEP 01 '51		
OCT 3 '58	DEC 14 '58		
MAR 17 '71	MAY 1 1994		
NOV 6 '72	MAR 15 1984		
NOV 29 '72	MAY 15 1995		
DEC 15 '73	JAN 02 2007		
JAN 5 '73	JAN 16 2007		
MAY 25 '73			
MAY 29 '73			
5-30 '73			
JAN 7 '74			
FEB 12 '74			
OCT 31 '84			
FEB 13 '85			
DEC 22 '88			
JAN 17 '90			
MAR 25 '90			
GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.





SOUTH HUNTERDON REG HS LIBRARY



34337000187373

The last of the Mohicans  
Cooper, James Fenimo

F Co